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After Prop. K, What Is Next For the Upper Great Highway?

By Megan Robertson

The four-lane highway overlooking Ocean Beach became the site of one of the most heated political disputes in San Francisco this election cycle.

Proposition K, a ballot measure which aimed to permanently shut-down the stretch of the Upper Great Highway (UGH) from Lincoln Way to Sloat Boulevard and convert it into a full-time city park, passed Nov. 5.

Supporters find excitement in the expansion of the City's part-time public space, which has been closed to most vehicles on weekends and holidays since 2020. Opposition for shutting down this space largely comes from residents who commute to Daly City and the South Bay via the highway, along with those who have concerns over the rerouting of commuter traffic.

Despite being shot down by approximately 60% of Sunset District and 70% of Richmond District voters, the measure passed citywide by 54.7%, with support coming mostly from the City's eastside residents.

Now, the City is quickly working to fully activate the space as a "car-free promenade" by early next year. On Nov. 21, the City was awarded a $1 million grant from the California State Coastal Conservancy to fund art projects, water fountains, trash bins, event programming and dune restoration.

The City is also in the process of applying for a Coastal Commission permit, which is needed before the space can be actualized as a city park. The current weekend shutdown agreement remains in-place

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Sunset Community Band Shares Westside Vibes

Sunset Community Band members Brian Heung, Marko Edwards, Alex Strachan, Jeff Fleischman, Cambria Gersten, Zakai Arnowitz, Nina Strachan, Mike Klaas, Jenny Larson Larsen, Chris Hardy and Allyson Ward at Washington Square Park. ***Story on page 11.*** ***Photo by Lauren Dare*.**

Seawall Plan Near Wastewater Treatment Plant Approved

By Thomas K. Pendergast

While the rest of the country debates the reality of climate change and sea levels rising, San Francisco is moving ahead with a plan to keep a sewage-water treatment plant from falling into the ocean.

The Oceanside Water Pollution Control Plant sits just east of what remains of the Great Highway extension between Sloat and Skyline boulevards.

The beach and cliffs on the western side of the roadway have been falling into the ocean since the 1990s. Last May, the San Francisco Board of Supervisors officially closed that extension roadway because it is teetering on the cliff's edge.

On Nov. 14, the California Coastal Commission (CCC) approved the City's $175 million plan to build a 3,200-foot-long seawall buried 55 feet deep at a sloping angle to protect the Lake Merced Tunnel and add a walking trail on top with other amenities, roughly along the lines of where the roadway is now.

Periodic dumping of more sand by the Army Corps of Engineers will cost about $1 million each time but is considered essential.

The San Francisco Public Utilities Commission's (SFPUC) Senior Project Manager Anna Roche described the basics of the project to the CCC.

"It's a very vertical area. The sand was placed in a very vertical manner to match the bluff that is out there now," Roche said. "That is not what the conditions are going to be when the project is built. The area is going to move back 80 feet, opening up 80 feet of beach, pushing that area back in a much more gentle slope, so that when the sand is placed, it doesn't have that interface that it has now.

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Beloved Sunset District Artist Douglas Gorney Dies at Age 63

By Erin Bank

The Sunset District art community grieves the loss of Douglas Gorney, who died of a heart attack on Nov. 19. Gorney, a native San Franciscan, was 63 years old and lived in the Sunset the last decade of his life.

Doug was born in 1961 to Elizabeth Gorney (née Majo) and Mark Gorney. Elizabeth, originally from Duluth, Minnesota, and Mark, originally from a Jewish community in Mexico City, met in San Francisco, then moved around during Mark's service in the US Navy. They returned to the City following the birth of Gorney's sister, Cynthia, in the 1950s.

The family settled in the Telegraph Hill/North Beach area, where Gorney and his younger brother Mark were born. Gorney attended the

Douglas Gorney displays his depiction of the Doggie Diner head, a Sunset District landmark. Before his death, Gorney was the leader of Sunset Sketchers, an artists' group. ***Photo by Philip Liborio Gangi.***

Town School for Boys and University High School. The family did not have a car, so they spent much of their time on public transportation. When Cynthia learned that her brother had become non-responsive on a BART train, she was struck by the circumstances.

"Knowing he was on a train surrounded by people trying to take care of him, and that it was quick, was some comfort," she said.

The Gorney family was tight-knit, and all three Gorney children remained in the Bay Area as adults.

According to Gorney's sister Cynthia, there was art in the family. Their mother had been an English student, and their father – a plastic surgeon – drew. Gorney's brother Mark is in the music business working as a publicist, booking agent, and as a vinyl DJ. Cynthia, who went on to become a career journalist, sketched in college, which she says had an impact on her younger brother.

"He would exaggerate how good I was and tell me he remembered my drawings," she said.

As the younger brother, Mark would follow Gorney around and remembers their bike rides when visiting Duluth. As adults, they stayed close, and their conversations would range from the philo-

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Papers Filed to Start Recall Process of District 4 Supervisor Joel Engardio

Left: Richard Corriea, retired SFPD commander and former captain at the Richmond Station, turns a petition signed by 80 Sunset District residents over to the SF Department of Elections to start a recall process against District 4 Supervisor Joel Engardio. Those calling for the ouster of the supervisor are upset over the recent passage of Proposition K, the measure Engardio introduced to close the Upper Great Highway to vehicle traffic. The supervisor has seven days to respond. If the language of the petition is approved, a signature-gathering drive would begin. Close to 10,000 valid signatures will have to be garnered from District 4 residents over the course of three months for a special election to be called. Right: Corriea addresses members of the press on Dec. 3 after handing over the recall petition. *Photos by Paul Kozakiewicz.*

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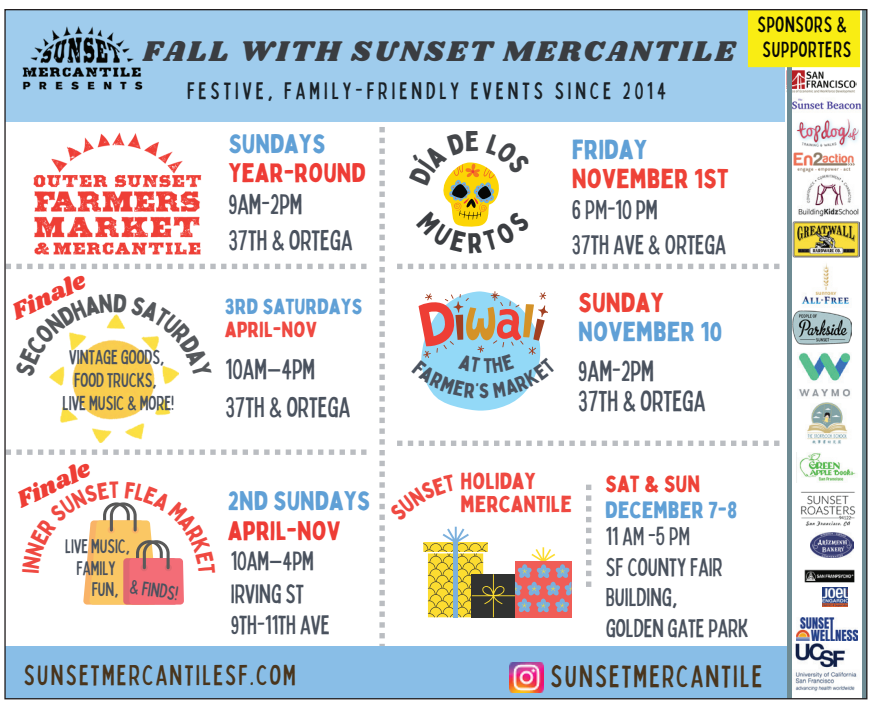

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P.O. Box 16035, S.F., CA 94116 ph: 415-706-6428
Editor@RichmondSunsetNews.com
RichmondSunsetNews.com
Publisher and Editor-in-Chief: Michael Durand **Editor:** Paul Kozakiewicz
Writers: Linda Badger, Erin Bank, George Brown V, Nicholas David Noma Faingold, Jonathan Farrell, Asha Ingram, Klyde Java, Clarisse Kim, Beth Lederer, Thomas K. Pendergast, Kate Quach, Megan Robertson, VaNessa VerLee
Photographers: Tyrone Bartoli, Noma Faingold, Clarisse Kim, Thomas K. Pendergast, Kate Quach
Columnists: Supervisor Joel Engardio, Judge Quentin L. Kopp (ret.), John M. Lee, Assemblymember Phil Ting
Cartoonist: Paul Kilduff **Bookkeeper:** Sue Kozakiewicz
Interns: Jillian Regan, Michael D. Wong **Social Media:** Hannah Holzer (X)
Send letters (not more than 350 words) to Editor@RichmondSunsetNews.com.

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Sunset District Neighbors Share a Wide Range of Opinions on Traffic Safety

By Thomas K. Pendergast

When the San Francisco County Transportation Authority (SFCTA) asked Sunset District residents for ideas to improve traffic safety in the Inner Sunset, the resulting post-it notes lining the walls of the SF County Fair Building on Nov. 18 provided a diverse collection of opinions.

So it came as no shock that a post-it consensus on what is best was not forthcoming.

The Inner Sunset Transportation Study is expected to identify traffic safety improvements in the general areas of Ninth Avenue and Lincoln Way, plus Kirkham and Judah streets to the south.

The SFCTA is looking for solutions that are quick to implement; conceptual designs for new projects which would include new signal timing or signage, and "bold concepts" with the potential for vehicle restrictions on commercial corridors.

It plans to publish the findings next spring.

If SFCTA is looking for "bold concepts," then they certainly asked the right folks.

Someone, for example, suggested converting Lincoln Way into a "slow street" and closing it down to traffic entirely on the weekends.

Closing down Irving Street between Ninth and 10th avenues to build a "pedestrian plaza," was another idea.

"If the closed brewery building, sitting next to the parking lot between Eighth and Ninth avenues, were to be torn down, then those lots could be merged and a four-story parking garage could be built there," was another suggestion.

A more simple and direct message posted said: "Cars are essential. Abolish the MTA."

Yet another post-it expanded on that idea.

"Abolish the MTA! Bikes are not more important than people's livelihoods. Close MLK to cars (send cars underground). Have cyclists walk their bikes between Eighth and 10th, Judah to Lincoln.

But the award for the ultimate minimalist post-it statement goes to whomever simply posted "WAYMO vehicles stink!"

A demand was made to open up JFK Drive in Golden Gate Park again.

Another demanded reversing the recently passed Proposition K and opening the Upper Great Highway to motor vehicles on weekdays.

Comments amplified the battle royal – bicycle lanes versus parking spots.

One called for more bike lanes, while another demanded fewer bike lanes, more lanes for cars and more parking spaces.

On Nov. 18, a crowd of involved neighbors filled the meeting room at the County Fair Building on Ninth Avenue in Golden Gate Park, just north of Lincoln Way. Participants shared their ideas on the changes they would like to see regarding traffic, cars, parking, bicycles, roadways and more. *Photo by Michael Durand.*

"Bike lanes please! Also, there could be some bike parking on the west side of Irving between Fourth and Eighth," said one note.

"Ticket cyclists who don't obey laws and almost mow down pedestrians," countered another. "There are plenty of accommodations for bikes. If there is a need for more bike lanes – make it fair for drivers."

"Double-parked cars on Irving force me to cross Muni tracks on my bicycle," another complained. "Enforcement of vehicles illegally parked in bike lanes."

"Double parked cars make it impossible to get off Muni train," another groused.

"Do not take away car parking to facilitate more bike lanes and bike/scooter rental areas," another demanded. "We're merchants on Ninth and Irving – customers complain about lack of parking. Need more public parking lots like the one on Eighth Avenue between Irving and Judah."

A more analytical approach to bike stations called for full financial transparency.

"Pre-eminent signage showing the fair market lease rate of bike rack space; the amount the bike company pays; the amount the City subsidizes the bike company," the writer requested.

Kirkham Street also got attention.

"Lose the roundabout on Kirkham," said one.

"Please remove the strange 'slow' yield reduction of two-way traffic into one single lane, not clear and very dangerous," posted another. "Remove the Kirkham '1 Lane' bridge as no one know how to use them and it has caused cars to go into bike lanes and I almost got hit."

"Please help traffic at Seventh and Kirkham – too much and getting dangerous for pedestrians."

Judah Street and the business parklets on it did not escape attention.

"Remove parklets on Judah. They block parking and bikes and cars," said one note. "More bulbouts on Judah west of Ninth Avenue – cars don't slow down for pedestrians in crosswalk."

"Safety for pedestrians at many intersections, particularly Seventh and Judah. Cars routinely are dangerous when making left turns."

One note showed parking meters have a fan.

"Parking meter hours should go to until 10 p.m. They should also not be free on Sundays," wrote one supporter. "More parking meters and longer hours, later in the p.m. and all weekends to maintain turnover and availability."

Seventh Avenue got its fair share of complaints as well.

"Crossing Seventh Avenue: Each block further south is increasingly dangerous for pedestrians," someone posted. "Seventh and Lawton is ridiculous. I've almost been hit there more times than I can count. Improve road and safety along Seventh Avenue up to Clarendon."

The coup-de-grace, however, came from the nominee for the most nihilistic post-it on the wall that night: "Don't want any of these options – where can we voice that?"

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Real Estate

John M. Lee

Real Estate Market Review

Looking back, as 2024 comes to an end, we have had another interesting year in the real estate market. The question being asked at the end of the year is always: "Where is the real estate market headed?"

The last up cycle in real estate finally ended in 2022, which started the downward trend and continued last year with higher inflation rates and rising interest rates causing even slower sales. This year, with the presidential and mayoral elections, the focus turned to issues such as crime, homelessness, affordable housing, inflation and how to make the City better. Following is a short recap of what happened this year in the San Francisco market.

The market started the year slow with the holiday carryover from 2023 and remained that way throughout the year. Owners trying to sell were disappointed by the market reaction to their properties. If the home was all fixed up, in a desirable location and at an attractive price, sellers were still able to get good prices as there are still buyers around. However, if there were some defects, the property might sit on the market for some time and sell at a discounted price.

Our preliminary numbers are showing that our sales in San Francisco will be up about 10.5% and prices up about 4.9% from 2023. I will do a more thorough analysis of our local Richmond and Sunset districts next month.

What does this mean? Is the downtrend over? Has the real estate market found a bottom and will trend up from here?

The readers of my columns know that our market operates in cycles which bottomed out in 2009, and we were in a strong recovery mode until 2022, including large double-digit appreciation from 2012-2015. The next few years came with slower or normal rate of appreciation.

In 2020, COVID-19 hit and we had a stoppage in the market for a couple of months before sales came roaring back strong with people reconsidering their long-term housing situation and taking advantage of historically low interest rates. Our market here on the west side did very well as the trend of moving from high-density to low-density locations was evident throughout and created much demand in the Richmond and Sunset districts. Prices increased here more than other parts of the City.

A down cycle started in 2022 and continued in 2023. Inflation was high and the Feds kept raising interest rates to try and keep it under control. The raises totaled 5.25% over the last two years. With each increase, mortgage rates rose accordingly. This year, the Feds were supposed to decrease interest rates about six times, but they ended up dropping rates only twice for a total of .75%.

While movement of long-term mortgage rates track close to 10-year treasury yields, the fed funds rate is one component that can affect it. Mortgage rates are more complicated as they also depend on other factors such as the supply and demand of funds and market trends. In 2024, 30-year mortgage rates started the year at about 7.5%, then dipped to 6% and ended the year at about 6.75%.

So where is the market heading in 2025? I believe that we have seen the worst of this market. Normally the cycle is about seven years up and three to four years down or flat before we recover. Currently we are at the bottom of the cycle. I expect that prices will continue to be flat to slightly up in 2025.

There is some excitement around Daniel Lurie becoming our next mayor and optimism about what he will bring to the City and how he will fix the problems we have. While people are worried about the Trump victory, the stock market and economy did do well when he was president.

We are fortunate in San Francisco that, despite the problems we have, we are still a desirable place to live and there are always buyers purchasing. So, if you are a seller, you can still sell your property at the right price. If you are a buyer, I would recommend proceeding with caution as large price appreciation will not be back for a couple more years, but there are opportunities out there. If you are a real estate investor, now might be a good time to pick up properties at prices that you could not have negotiated in the last few years.

I enjoyed speaking and exchanging emails with you this past year. Many of you had some great questions and insights about our market and the Richmond and Sunset districts. I wish you a safe holiday season and a prosperous 2025!

John M. Lee is a broker with Compass specializing in the Richmond and Sunset districts. If you have any real estate questions, call him at 415-465-0505 or email johnlee@isellsf.com. Find an archive of his columns at RichmondSunsetNews.com.

Sunset Homes Sold in November*

Address	Bed	Bath	Sq. Ft.	Price
2487 45th Ave.	2	1	1,115	$900,000
1607 47th Ave.	3	2	1,268	1,100,000
4218 Lawton St.	2	1	990	1,150,000
2615 Lincoln Way	3	1.5	1,550	1,210,000
2661 Yorba St.	3	2.5	1,782	1,266,000
2186 26th Ave.	2	2	1,478	1,298,000
2350 27th Ave.	2	2	1,508	1,350,000
2207 21st Ave.	5	4	1,708	1,387,500
1687 32nd Ave.	2	1	1,150	1,438,888
2170 26th Ave.	3	2	1,315	1,500,000
3030 Rivera St.	3	2	1,707	1,550,000
1466 44th Ave.	2	1	1,130	1,600,000
1465 38th Ave.	2	1	1,390	1,675,000
1335 14th Ave.	3	2	1,430	1,708,000
1743 17th Ave.	3	2	1,958	1,850,000
1555 21st Ave.	3	3	1,732	1,952,000
1615 15th Ave.	4	2.5	2,281	2,000,000
1754 Eighth Ave.	3	3	2,025	2,380,000
1565 16th Ave.	3	3	2,926	3,810,000

**Partial listing. Source: M.L.S.*

From the Editor

Michael Durand

Celebrating Good Fortune

We just celebrated my favorite holiday: Thanksgiving.

In addition to enjoying great food, gratitude is at the very core of my being. I am sincerely thankful for so many people and things in my life.

I feel extraordinarily lucky to have been born into a loving family, to have been brought up in a great little town on Long Island in New York (yay, Merrick!), to go to a great college (thank you, Stony Brook) and to be motivated to move to San Francisco in 1978.

I truly love this City and feel especially lucky to be connected to the Richmond and Sunset districts. When the opportunity to buy the Richmond Review and Sunset Beacon newspapers came up almost six years ago, I had the good fortune to purchase them from a friend who has kept a close eye on his babies over these years. Paul Kozakiewicz started both publications and helps me edit the final copies every month. Trust me, everyone needs an editor – even editors.

I have had the opportunity to work with some terrific writers and am especially proud of the students who had the courage to step forward and offer to write for their neighborhood papers. In addition to several talented high school students who have submitted stories for publication, one of our better writers is in the eighth grade! He recently turned 13 years old. I am so proud of him.

Very Sad News

Thank you to Erin Bank who wrote the story in this month's issue about the passing of Sunset District resident Doug Gorney.

I consider myself very fortunate to have met and gotten to know Doug. He was a true

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Garden for the Environment Cultivating Community in the Sunset

By Megan Robertson

Walking along Seventh Avenue at Lawton Street in the Inner Sunset, Garden for the Environment's yellow banner appears as a beacon of the natural world among the city streets, inviting San Franciscans to "come on in" to its green space. The teaching garden is home to a "reservoir of community," as garden staff like to call it.

Funded by the San Francisco Public Utilities Commission (SFPUC), Garden for the Environment serves approximately 2,500 people a year, providing programming on subjects like urban composting, growing food, beekeeping and seasonal fruit tree maintenance. Its "Get Up!" three-month, application-only, intensive composting program, is a staple of the space.

The garden was founded in 1990.

"It has forever had the purpose of being a teaching and demonstration space, which really makes us distinct from most other gardening programs in San Francisco, of which there are many wonderful ones," said Maggie Marks, executive director of the garden.

The space has programming six days a week, two of which are aimed at youth when the garden becomes the site of school field trips. Many of the workshops are in collaboration with other Bay Area environmental organizations.

"We teach people about the environment – soil, water, plants, creatures and climate – so together we can grow a resilient, more beautiful world," according to the garden's website.

"(The programming) is community building, it's network building, it's long-standing relationships, it's the experts that we connect with," Marks said. "It's a culmination of all of the years that we've been around.

"There's also our interest in bringing in diverse voices and creating opportunities," Marks continued. "Last year, for example, we had a soil scientist from Davis who used our site as a soil sample site and taught a bilingual Spanish class all about soil."

On Nov. 16, the space was busy with visitors attending a rainwater harvesting workshop, in addition to offerings of a holiday wreath making workshop and appearances from regular Saturday garden volunteers.

Enjoying pastries while hummingbirds and bees flew overhead, attendees of the rainwater harvesting workshop learned about Bay Area waterways and how to install their own rainwater catchment systems.

"We offer this workshop twice a year and we have for at least 10 years," Marks said.

Instructor Kat Sawyer is the Greening Urban Watersheds Program manager for The Watershed Project, a Richmond, California-based organization aimed at protecting local watersheds. Sawyer has been involved with Garden for the Environment since 2002.

"What (workshops) do is they empower people to pursue their interests and do something tangible that makes them feel more connected, more fulfilled," Sawyer said. "That is the power of it – the applied knowledge."

Sawyer not only instructed attendees how to install a rainwater catchment system on their properties, but also taught them about what watersheds are and about the watershed here in San Francisco.

"I always try to focus on putting some context before going deep into the technical thing, like really start to think about, 'Hey, where does your water come from?'" Sawyer said.

The workshop brought Berkeley resident Sarah Cunniff back to the garden for a second time. After visiting once, she said she was excited to return and learn how to make the most of the upcoming weather.

"We're entering the rainy season here, and most of the year we don't have enough. I want to try to do what I can to help conserve," Cunniff said. "I learned that installing a system is much more doable than I first thought."

Attendee Jon Corbet came for something fun to do in the City and left with plans to install his own rainwater catchment system.

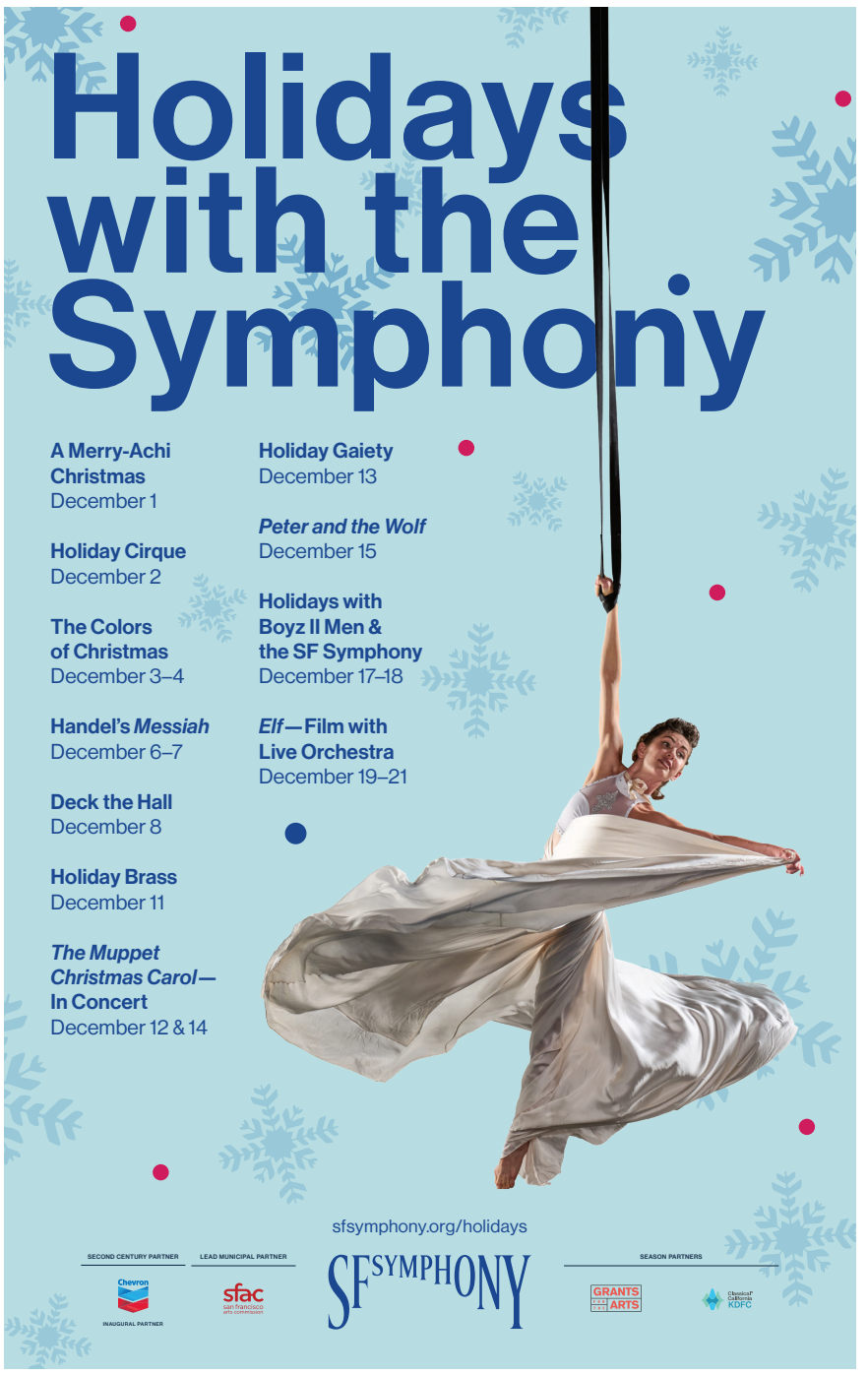
"It's something I've looked into before," he said. "Now that it makes sense, I'm going to try to twist my landlord's arm and have him install one."

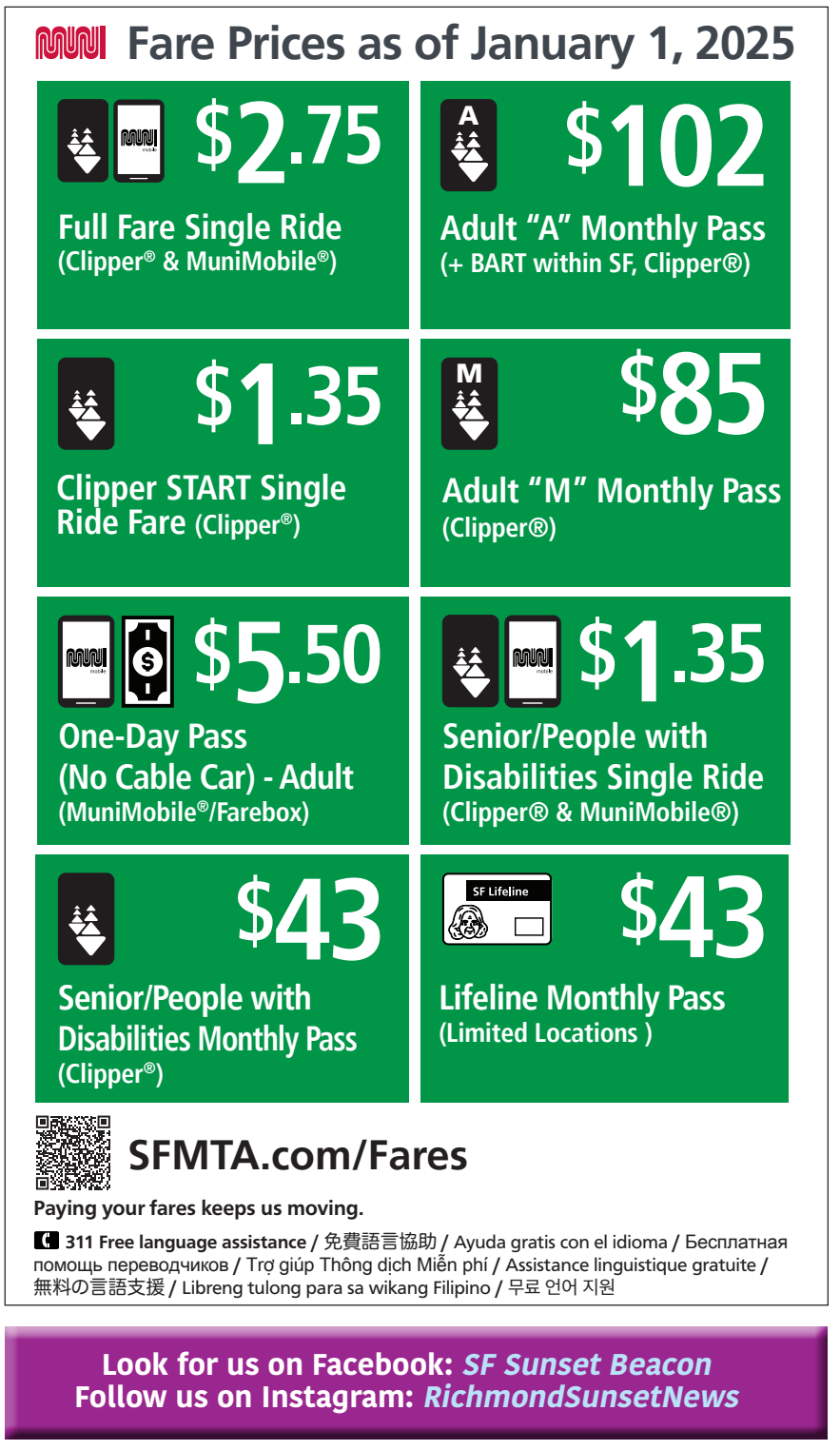
The space is fully open to the public. While some came for specific reasons, others found their way in just by walking around the neighborhood.

"For a teaching garden like the Garden for the Environment, I think that's the value, that you can drop by and just walk through and enjoy it for what it is, or you can look into it and see that you want to take a specific workshop. You can just get in where you fit in," Sawyer said. "It's kind of an analog thing in a digital world. You're doing something with your hands. I think it helps us find a balance in our day-to-day life."

Garden for the Environment has a number of upcoming workshops, which can be accessed at gardenfortheenvironment.org. It will be hosting a holiday open house on Dec. 14.

The Garden for the Environment, located at Seventh Avenue and Lawton Street was founded in 1990 and is open to visitors. *Photo by Megan Robertson.*

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Commentary

Quentin L. Kopp

Follow the Money

Mark Twain once explained to readers in the 19th century: "I have never let my schooling interfere with my education."

President Ronald Reagan imparted such education, which is applicable after the Nov. 5 presidential election: "Freedom is never more than one generation from extinction. We didn't pass it to our children in the bloodstream. It must be fought for, protected and handed down for them to do the same."

With Donald Trump in the White House, crazier but wilier than ever, we must fight the self-effacement at 1600 Pennsylvania Ave., NW Washington D.C., 20500.

There could perhaps be a new award nationally for the worst presidential appointment of all presidential administrations. I nominate Pete Hegseth, who paid a woman money in 2020 to settle a sexual assault claim from 2017 where he had a speaking engagement in Monterey, and last month became by default Mr. Trump's next nominee for secretary of Defense. The default was by former Congressman Matt Gaetz of Pennsylvania who withdrew from the fray amidst a House of Representatives Ethics Committee investigation of him of sexual assault. The Wall Street Journal instantly questioned the wisdom of that nomination, declaring the secretary of Defense "must have the president's trust." Amen!

We'll know after Hegseth's hearing whether another Trumpster's nomination is withdrawn amidst White House musical chairs. Add Robert F. Kennedy Jr. as secretary of Health and Human Services for ignominious recognition as cabinet secretaries. I was the late Bobby Kennedy's Lawyers Committee chairman for San Francisco in his 1968 primary campaign for the Democratic presidential nomination and met him at the Fairmont Hotel the night before he was assassinated in Los Angeles on primary day. He was a smart, tough, Harvard-educated leader. His son, ex-Santa Monica mayor, is an embarrassment to the Kennedy family and scientific advancement in medical care and treatment.

Maybe President-elect Trump can surprise us in foreign affairs. Otherwise, I anticipate his obsequiousness and association with Putin who manifestly seeks reiteration of the Soviet Union, first by conquering Ukraine, then by abandoning Israel to its historic enemies while NATO withers. I forecast no or little good from Trump's presidency and hope we survive as a free, fruitful and democratic nation of law, order, economic opportunity and source of aid to democratic nations.

Apropos my informing readers of SFMTA's (the "Muni," to old-timers like this columnist) budgetary gift of $11 million over two budget years (2024-2025 and 2025-2026), reader John Daniels notes a San Francisco Examiner story about SFMTA's $322 million expected 2026-27 deficit and preparation to cut Municipal Railway service now. Simultaneously, the City and the County confronts a budget deficit of almost $800 million for fiscal year 2025-2026.

Speaking of rail transit, the California High-Speed Rail Authority continues to bamboozle the tax-paying public, legislators and print media. A personal inspection by State Sen. Dave Cortese, a San Francisco Democrat and chairman of the Senate Transportation Committee revealed the myth that the Authority is actually building 171 miles of electrified tracks between Merced and Bakersfield. It can't. It hasn't, after 15 years of expending more than $16 billion of federal and state taxpayer money, laid any track and its current plan consists of regular tracks which would (if ever built) not be electrified.

As Sen. Cortese confirmed to me, it's only building viaducts to enable track to be laid. In November 2008, state voters approved a $9.95 billion general obligation bond issue promising San Francisco to Los Angeles electrified train service in less than three hours by 2020. I chaired the campaign as the president of the Authority governing board and author of 1996 legislation, as a state senator, establishing such Authority. Voters approved the bond by 52% to 48%. It has turned out to be one of California's memorable boondoggles, while the Authority committed "to delivering passenger rail service between 2030 and 2033" in a public "briefing" by staff on May 16. The Authority concedes, however, it has no funding. The 2008 bond money has been exhausted; there's no Barack Obama or Democratic Congress to appropriate federal taxpayer money.

Trump and his acolytes despise California – so, do Congressional Republican leaders. I apologize to California voters for persuading them to support a rail system built and operating successfully in Japan, France, Italy, Germany, Spain, Great Britain, Spain and, of course, the Chinese Communist dictatorship. It's possible the Authority will close shop next year, although our governor will be a presidential candidate and may generate some political pap to prevent the flop from being associated with him as he rules the circuit from Maine to Oregon and points in between.

As we welcome Daniel Lurie, a native son, as our next mayor in January and a few changes on the Board of Supervisors, including the departure of Board of Supervisors President Aaron Peskin, the most knowledgeable supervisor concerning our local government, I reflect on the July 18 online reporting by the Chronicle's Nami Sumida about S.F.'s highest-paid city employees. The highest compensated isn't Mayor London Breed, District Attorney Brooke Jenkins or Police Chief Bill Scott, all favorites of mine: It's Alison Romano, chief executive and investment officer in the Retirement Services, our pension office, with $842,000. Police Sgt. Frank Harrell received $765,000 of which some $450,000 constitutes overtime. It's more than twice his regular salary. Mayor Breed received $469,000 (God bless her), including $373,000 regular pay, $57,000 in retirement pay, $22,000 for medical and dental benefits and $17,000 for unemployment insurance and Social Security. Chief Scott obtained $547,000, Fire Chief Jeanine Nicholson secures $540,000 and Sheriff Paul Miyamoto earned $532,000. About 200 employees received more money than Mayor Breed, who is the highest paid California mayor. Supervisors receive $163,000 and are worth every penny thereof as District 4 voters contemplate recalling Supervisor Joel Engardio, the magistrate of closing the Upper Great Highway to private motor vehicles.

I conclude until 2025, as follows: "As democracy is perfected, the office of president represents, more and more closely, the inner soul of the people. On some great and glorious day, the plain folks of the land will reach their heart's desire and at last the White House will be adorned by a downright moron." That was H.L. Mencken's "On Politics: A Carnival of Buncombe." That's fitting.

Meanwhile, my family and I convey warm wishes to all San Franciscans for a Happy Chanukah, Merry Christmas and healthy, happy new year.

Quentin Kopp is a former San Francisco supervisor, state senator, SF Ethics Commission member, president of the California High Speed Rail Authority governing board and retired Superior Court judge.

Legion of Honor Hosts Community Celebration to Mark Its 100-Year Anniversary

By Klyde Java

On Nov. 9, the Legion of Honor began its 100th anniversary celebration with festivities including a cake picnic, screen-printing press and portrait station with the museum's most prominent sculpture, a bronze cast of "The Thinker," by Auguste Rodin (1904).

A performance from the George Washington High School marching band ushered in the party with heavy drums and harmonic brass. As part of the Free Saturdays program, Bay Area residents delighted in free admission to the museum.

The weekend-long celebration began with an opening ceremony, consisting of remarks from House Speaker Emerita Nancy Pelosi; San Francisco supervisors Connie Chan and Aaron Peskin; the consul general of France in San Francisco, Florian Cardinaux; and the grand chancelier de la Légion d'Honneur, France, François Lecointre.

Thomas P. Campbell, director and CEO of the Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco (FAMSAF), was awarded a congressional certificate by Pelosi. Campbell and Lecointre concluded the event with a centennial cake cutting.

Once the site of the City-owned Golden Gate Cemetery, San Francisco mogul Adolph Spreckels purchased the land and gifted it to his wife Alma Spreckels who convinced him to open an art museum. This suggestion resulted in the creation of the Legion of Honor (previously known as the Palace of the Legion of Honor).

The centennial celebration at the Legion of Honor included a cake party on the front lawn (above) and a performance by the nearby George Washington High School band (right). *Photos by Klyde Java.*

"Inspired by the French pavilion at the 1915 Panama-Pacific International Exposition, Alma Spreckels, with the support of her husband Adolph, sought to create a museum celebrating French art and culture, leading to the construction of the Legion of Honor," Peskin said in his remarks.

The Legion opened on Armistice Day in 1924 and established itself as a monument to classic European art and culture as well as serving as a memorial for the 3,600 California soldiers who perished during World War I.

Since the museum's inception, its collections have expanded dramatically, boasting rosettes from 2000 B.C. to pieces from 19th century impressionists Pierre-Auguste Renoir and Vincent van Gogh. The museum still acquires pieces; a recent purchase of Renaissance artist Lavinia Fontana's "Portrait of Bianca degli Utili Maselli and Her Children" debuted earlier this year.

The joy of the arts was the recurring motif of the day. Curious observers stood stoically in front of paintings, while others meticulously sketched the luminous water lilies of Monet. Visitors enjoyed a slice of cake just outside the museum's triumphal arch.

The day's activities reinforced the importance of the arts and its ability to generate curiosity and reflection.

"The arts are unifying to our country, and I think it's going to be the salvation of our country," Pelosi said.

She believes art and its museums are spaces "where we can come together, forget our differences, be inspired, laugh together and cry together."

The Legion of Honor is located at 100 34th Ave. Learn more at famsf.org/visit/legion-of-honor.

Find us on Facebook: SF Sunset Beacon

ANNOUNCEMENTS

CAR FOR SALE

2008 VW Beetle for sale. Like-new. Great body, white interior, good black paint, brand new tires from Costco, doesn't smoke or burn oil, engine runs great, $4,200. Clean title, clean car in SF. 805-455-9520.

COMMENTARIES AND LETTERS

From the editor: All commentaries we publish are the opinions of the writers and should not be considered our editorial stance on issues. We strive to remain neutral and offer a balance of viewpoints. We invite readers who wish to express their opinions to send a letter to the editor to Editor@RichmondSunsetNews.com. Word limit for the newspaper is 350, for the website, 500. RichmondSunsetNews.com.

FELTON TECH SQUAD

Felton's Tech Squad provides free basic tech support for older adults and people with disabilities. There will be no tech support sessions at the Ortega Branch Library in December. We are seeking volunteers who speak English and/or Cantonese. For more information, call 415-474-1558 or email techsquad@felton.org.

FREE EVENTS AT THE SF PUBLIC LIBRARY, SUNSET BRANCH 1305 18TH AVE., 415-355-2808, sunmgr@SFPL.org

Tutorial: Tablet/Smartphone Class For Older Adults 60+. Friday, Dec. 20, 1-2:30 p.m. Self-Help for the Elderly's training program is ideal for those seeking to enhance their technical skills. The program focuses on hands-on training, allowing participants to become proficient in using their smartphones and tablets. Bring your device along and prepare to become an expert!
Device type: iOS and Android. Topic: iCloud and Google Drive:
- The identification of iCloud and Google Drive
- How to upload a file?
- How to manage it?

Space limited. Reservations required: 415-355-2808 (starting Dec. 6).
Tutorial: Book a Librarian. Tuesdays, 11 a.m.-noon. One-on-one information session. Services can include tech questions for iPhone or Android smartphones, internet searching and more. Each session is 30 minutes. Space is limited. Reservations required: 415-355-2808.
Tutorial: Tech Help. Sundays, 1:30-3:30 p.m. Tech coaches are available to help with basic questions about technology, such as computer tasks or how to use your phone or tablet. These interns can help you learn how to attach a file to an email, send photos from your phone and more. This is a drop-in program, first come, first-served.

FREE PUPPIES

Two AKC reg male and female Yorkie puppies free to a good home. If interested, contact danamorgan189@gmail.com.

GIFTS AT THE GARDEN - HOLIDAY MARKET

Support local and sustainable crafts this year at Gifts at the Garden, a free-to-attend curated market of sustainable, local and fair-trade gifts alongside exclusive Gardens of Golden Gate Park merchandise, books and art. The market will host free activities and a donation-based wrapping station. Proceeds benefit the Gardens of Golden Gate Park. Gardens members can shop two hours early on Saturday, Dec. 14. To beat the crowds and shop the best selection, become a member at gggp.org. Featured programs include Haight Street Art Center, family fun with San Francisco Bay Area Moms, Say Ya! Photo Booth, the Gardens of Golden Gate Park Bookstore and Plant Shop and more. San Francisco County Fair Building, 1199 Ninth Ave.
For more information, call Jamie Chan at 415-661-1316, email jchan@gggp.org or go to gggp.org. Saturday, Dec. 14, noon-5 p.m. and Sunday, Dec. 15, 10 a.m.-5 p.m. Free. Tickets/registration: gggp.org/event/gifts-at-the-garden/.

HAPPY BIRTHDAY

Happy December birthday to Arya, Jarrod B., Livvy and Saffy Basey, Jen Berman, Arlene Bradlyn, Virginia Carr, Derrick Carvajal, Ryan 'Puddin Pants' Chan, Helen Curran, Luca "The Bazooka" Dermu, Aaron Ding, Nico Eshel, Justine Fields, Brandon Gee, Sima Grabovsky, Brandon Hom, Kim Hom, Mackenzie Huynh, Colleen Ishida, Maria Jesue, Paul Kozakiewicz, Suzanne Leigh, Mallory Lue, Melissa Ann Lue, Shannon "Spilly" Magnin, Dave Mana, Brittany B. Markert, Bryan Marsh, Leland Monagle, Bob Reinheimer, Laurie Rittman, Austin Rowland, Reid Russell, Boden Snyder, Shay Sosa, Amanda Tran, Marisa Lue Tse, Millie Young, David Wang, Athena Weber, Alan Randall Wong, Allison J. Wong, David Wong and Vikki Wong. *To add a name to the monthly birthday list, email Editor@RichmondSunsetNews.com. Free.*

HOLIDAYS ON TARAVAL RETURNS

We invite one and all to come and enjoy Holidays on Taraval, a festive celebration featuring People of Parkside Sunset's annual tree-lighting ceremony, shopping, music and community fun! Join the People of Parkside Sunset, the Sunset Chinese Cultural District and Sunset Mercantile on Friday, Dec. 13, 4-8 p.m. for a very special collaborative celebration of the small businesses, community and culture on and around Taraval Street! Activities include the annual tree lighting at McCoppin Square, performances, art and games along with a pop-up marketplace of local makers, merchants and organizations. Be sure to explore all of the unique shops and restaurants of Taraval as many will be offering exciting in-shop events and specials that day all the way down to Ocean Beach! Learn more atsunsetmercantilesf.com.

"PET PIX"

We feature photos of your beloved pets each month. Send up to three jpegs with the pet's name to Editor@RichmondSunsetNews.com.

LONG-TERM CARE OMBUDSMAN PROGRAM

The San Francisco Long-Term Care Ombudsman program offers free, confidential support to address issues raised by residents in long-term care facilities and free training opportunities for those interested in becoming volunteer ombudsmen. For details on training or accessing support, call 415-751-9788 or email ombudsman@felton.org.

OFFICE FOR LEASE

Prime Inner Richmond location. Approx. 300 SF, Move-in condition! For more info, contact Erston Pearcy at 415-625-0000, x2120 or erston@housingguild.com (DRE #03198768).

OUTER SUNSET FARMERS MARKET AND MERCANTILE

Join us every Sunday at the Outer Sunset Farmers Market and Mercantile where you can find fresh produce from local farmers and ranchers, enjoy delicious dishes from Outer Sunset eateries and discover unique finds from local makers and artisans. Every Sunday, find a revolving series of live performers, engaging activities and exhibitions at the ArtShip and fun zone! Our farmers market accepts WIC, EBT and Market Match. 37th Avenue at Ortega Street, 9 a.m.-2 p.m. Go to sunsetmercantilesf.com or call 415-465-2475 for more details.

"PHOTOS OF THE MONTH" ONLINE GALLERY

Photographers are invited to submit three of their best photos for consideration to be published in the "Photos of the Month" gallery on RichmondSunsetNews.com. The website averages 20,000 views per month. Please submit photos as jpegs on the 15th of each month. For more information, email Editor@RichmondSunsetNews.com or call 415-706-6428.

REFUSE REFUSE CLEANUPS

Monday, Dec. 2, 8-9 a.m., Outer Sunset Morning Cleanup, mobilize.us/togethersf/event/604552/.
Sunday, Dec. 8, 1-3 p.m., Great Highway Park Cleanup, mobilize.us/togethersf/event/448138/.
Wednesday, Dec. 11, 4-5 p.m., Inner Sunset Happy Hour Cleanup, mobilize.us/togethersf/event/581814/.
Saturday, Dec. 14, 10 a.m.-noon, Central Sunset Cleanup, mobilize.us/togethersf/event/546732/.
Saturday, Dec. 28, 10 a.m.–noon, Inner Sunset Cleanup, mobilize.us/togethersf/event/464169/.

SALVATION ARMY PINEHURST HOLIDAY FESTIVAL

Silent Auction, gifts, jewelry, bakery, homemade piroshkis, holiday decorations, pictures with Santa and Mrs Claus and more. Saturday, Dec. 7, 11 a.m-3 p.m., free. Pinehurst Lodge, 2685 30th Ave. at Wawona Street. For more information, email nevadasissy@yahoo.com.

SECONDHAND SATURDAYS

Come check out Secondhand Saturdays and celebrate all things vintage, antique and secondhand. Presented by Sunset Mercantile every third Saturday of the month at Ortega Street and 37th Avenue, 10 a.m.-4 p.m. Shop local from more than 50 vintage vendors, makers and artisans that are some of the Bay Area's best. Enjoy live music, family-friendly activities, food trucks, rotating monthly features and more! Visit sunsetmercantilesf.com/secondhand/ for more information.

STAMP COLLECTOR AND STAMP COLLECTIONS

Stamp collector is buying stamps and stamp collections. I am buying "older stamps" from the 1800s to 1930. American Philatelic Society member since 1986. Pictures are appreciated. Call or text message 415-533-0761.

THANK YOU!

Sincere thanks to the Sunset Beacon readers who generously donated or signed up for our Patreon campaign. Your contribution helps keep us financially healthy. If you donated and would like some of our Sunset Beacon branded products (tote bag, pens, coffee mug, hat

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West Side Is Home to Internet Archive, a Treasure Trove of Digital Information

By Nicholas David

The print edition of this newspaper was once the only edition available, before the internet came along. The banner was orange and black, stylized "the Richmond ReView," and the paper featured monthly opinion columns from then-Mayor Art Agnos and Frank Jordan after him.

In 1990 the paper ran a small advertisement listing Christian Science Churches across the city, including one at 300 Funston Ave. All of this is easily accessible online thanks to the organization that now occupies that building on the corner of Funston and Clement, no longer a Christian Science church.

The Internet Archive is host to millions of digitized and preserved ephemera – more than 150 petabyte (1,000 terabytes or one million gigabytes) of material, from newspaper scans to radio shows and television broadcasts – including most editions of the Richmond Review since 1988. Visitors to the Archive will be sure to hear its lofty mission, likely more than once: Providing "universal access to all knowledge."

"I think this is the challenge of our times," said Mark Graham, who directs The Wayback Machine, which has archived billions of web pages since 1996. Far from just a nostalgia trip (which it is certainly good for), Graham sees the Internet Archive as an antidote to a widespread media malaise, an unintended consequence of the internet media landscape.

"What we've experienced over the last few decades is a massive proliferation and diversification in the availability of information and material in all different sources and all different mediums," Graham said. "This information diet has been poisoned. It has been poisoned by mis and disinformation."

The Internet Archive is a project for our times, woven into the fabric of the digital age. Not coincidentally, the nonprofit is also a part of the urban fabric in the Richmond District.

"We're a library, and one of the functions of a library is to be available to its patrons," Graham said. "Now, we're a digital library, first and foremost, so you don't need to physically be here to benefit from our services, but it does give us a way to learn more about what people's interests are, and for them to learn more about what we have to offer."

The Archive has been in the news in recent months as a result of threats to its mission, most recently cyberattacks which exposed user data and put many of its operations on hold for more than a month. For Graham, the Archive is just one among every library in the world experiencing an increasingly hostile landscape. Libraries on the whole "are under attack from a variety of vectors," he said, citing book bans and budget cuts, in addition to cyberattacks, from which "libraries all over the world have suffered."

Another of those vectors, for the Internet Archive at least, is lawsuits. One of the two recent legal battles over copyright – Hachette v. Internet Archive – has changed the way the Archive can offer certain digital materials, limiting its book lending services.

"It's a devastating loss," said Lila Bailey, the Archive's senior policy counsel. "It has already represented a huge hit to access to information," she said of the recent Second Circuit Court decision.

Still, Bailey believes in the mission of the Archive. Outside of her official capacity as the senior attorney, her ex-

Continued on page 14

Assembly

Assemblymember Phil Ting

Goodbye and Thank You

My time as your Assemblymember representing the west side of San Francisco has come to an end, after reaching the maximum 12 years dictated by term limits.

I appreciate your support, re-electing me at every opportunity and attending my numerous town halls, community breakfasts, bike fairs and more. It has been an honor of a lifetime to serve you. I never had ambitions to be a state lawmaker, and I was as surprised as my immigrant parents that a career in government is where I ended up.

After my father came to America, he worked as a lighting technician at CBS Studios in Los Angeles. He thought this was the most amazing place in the world. And it is. Having been born and raised in California, I owe everything that I've become to this great state. I'm a product of public education – from grade school all the way through college.

I sought public office because I wanted the same opportunity for all Californians and to make the lives of 40 million people better. I came to Sacramento on the heels of the Great Recession, and I remember reading the Economist's cover story, asking if the California Dream is over. Clearly, no.

Since then, the Golden State went from eighth largest economy in world to number five. Among the highlights that strengthened our standing, whether through policy or as Assembly budget chair:

Education

• K-12 per-pupil spending is now approaching $24,000, the highest in state history.

• Creation of transitional kindergarten.

• Universal school meals, regardless of income.

• Thousands more slots for California students at U.C. and Cal State schools.

• Increased financial aid or stipends through CalGrants, the Middle-Class Scholarship program and the nation's largest service corps.

Housing

• Affordable housing projects are prioritized on surplus public lands.

• Made it more difficult to delay residential construction once CEQA requirements are met.

• Assisted first-time home buyers with down payment assistance.

• Lessened bureaucracy for building backyard units called ADUs.

• Tax incentives for developers to convert empty commercial spaces in downtown San Francisco into housing.

Safety Net Programs

• Expansion of Medi-Cal to cover health care for lower-income Californians, regardless of immigration status.

• Mental health services for students, as schools reopened from the pandemic.

• Financial assistance to distressed hospitals, including Seton Medical Center in Daly City.

• Refrigeration grants to corner markets, enabling them to sell fresh produce in neighborhoods lacking grocery stores.

Equity and Fairness

• Legacy admissions coming to end, banning private universities and colleges from giving preferential treatment to applicants related to alumni and wealthy donors.

• Single-user restrooms must be accessible to all.

• Allow unjustly long incarceration periods to be re-evaluated for resentencing.

• Unprecedented investment in AAPI communities during the pandemic to stop Asian hate attacks.

Environment

• Clean car tax incentives to ramp up California's transition away from fossil fuels and necessary charging infrastructure.

• Shortened the timeline for school districts to change over to electric buses.

• Kept the Golden Gate Bridge and state-owned bridges toll-free for bicyclists and pedestrians.

• Created a mobile recycling center for beverage containers.

• Banned harmful PFAS chemicals from food wrappers, household fabrics and outdoor wear.

In California, we have always written our own story, forging ahead before most states – even countries. And I'm proud of the work we did. I could not have done it all without my staff, past and present, who have helped me along the way – whether it was in San Francisco or up at the State Capitol. They worked hard, and I am appreciative of their efforts that resulted in so many accomplishments.

I have yet to decide what I will do next. However, you can follow my non-state accounts, such as X (formerly Twitter), Facebook, and LinkedIn to keep up on my professional endeavors. To stay in touch, my email is now info@philting.com.

Phil Ting represents the 19th Assembly District, which includes the west side of San Francisco along with the communities of Broadmoor, Colma, and Daly City as well as parts of South San Francisco and San Bruno.

Phil Ting represents the 19th Assembly District, which includes the west side of San Francisco along with the communities of Broadmoor, Colma and Daly City as well as part of South San Francisco. Find an archive of his columns at RichmondSunsetNews.com.

Douglas Gorney

Continued from page 1

sophical to the granular. They shared an interest in avant garde art and music and recorded comedic audio sketches under the name Anteater Theater.

"He knew the answer to everything," Mark said.

Gorney did not show a proclivity toward fine arts until he was in college, first at Wesleyan College in Massachusetts and then at the University of California, Berkeley. There, he took art classes and went on to study sculpture at the California College of Arts and Crafts (now the College of the Arts) and the Art Institute of Chicago. He worked as an assistant for the famous San Francisco sculptor Aristides Demetrios and filled notebooks with ideas.

Gorney's path then took him to Fairfield, Iowa to study and teach transcendental meditation, a practice he started in high school. He then returned to San Francisco and lived in the Mission District. He began writing and editing for early business websites, which served as his career for many years. It was only about 15 years ago when he began sketching and painting, thanks to a paint set given to him by his girlfriend. He kept writing but eventually realized he could work on commission and become a paid artist.

It wasn't an easy path, and Gorney moved to the Sunset District in 2012 in search of lower rent. This ended up being a huge turning point in his life.

"He fell in love with the colors of the sky when the fog lifts, and of course Ocean Beach," Cynthia said, adding it was fun for the family to visit because they hadn't spent much time in the Sunset growing up.

"He painted everything. He really loved drawing the infrastructure – the light poles and the electric poles and the corners and the houses and the driveways," she said.

Gorney started a local chapter of the San Francisco Urban Sketchers group, the Sunset Sketchers, in 2018. The group meets every weekend to draw outside together. Gorney wanted to welcome everyone in, regardless of skill or training, and served as a mentor for many of the artists in the group. He was also a co-founder of the B0ardside collaborative (using a zero instead of the letter o) that publishes a quarterly zine.

"I can't get over how he made this wonderful family and world around him as a function of his art," Cynthia said.

As testament to his impact on the Sunset neighborhood, District 4 Supervisor Joel Engardio submitted an in-memoriam at a Board of Supervisors meeting.

A memorial service for Gorney took place on Nov. 30 at the Swedenborgian Church in Pacific Heights. The church was filled and overflowing with family and friends.

"Doug was genuine, good with people, and a supportive and gentle soul. He was someone you could not dislike," Mark said. "I'm mad we will never get to see what his career could have been."

To learn more about the artist, go to gorney.studio.

Samples of Gorney's work, including many Sunset District scenes, can be found on his website: gorney.studio. *Artwork by Douglas Gorney.*

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Police Blotter

Injury Vehicle Collision: Parnassus Avenue and Stanyan Street, Oct. 22, 8:44 a.m.

Officers responded to the intersection of Parnassus Avenue and Stanyan Street for a report of a vehicle collision involving a pedestrian.

On arrival, medics were already on scene and had declared the pedestrian deceased.

Per officers' preliminary investigation, the vehicle and pedestrian were both traveling south on Stanyan Street at Parnassus Avenue when the vehicle proceeded to make a right turn onto Parnassus Avenue and collided into the pedestrian. The pedestrian died at the scene.

Battery on a Police Officer, Resisting Arrest: 1900 Block of Irving Street, Nov. 5, 1:09 a.m.

Officers responded to a report of an unruly customer who was trespassing.

Officers arrived and attempted to detain the suspect. The suspect was acting erratically and was non-compliant.

The suspect was placed in handcuffs and officers tried to put the suspect in the police vehicle. The suspect prevented the officer from placing a seatbelt on the suspect and prevented the officer from closing the vehicle door. The suspect at one point bit the officer on his shoulder.

The suspect was cited.

Battery: 19th Avenue and Judah Street, Nov. 9, 9:28 p.m.

The victim saw an acquaintance (the suspect) and started walking toward him.

The suspect suddenly assaulted the victim. The suspect claimed the victim had assaulted a mutual friend of theirs.

The suspect fled the scene.

Robbery: 1500 Block of Sloat Boulevard, Nov. 11, 11:27 p.m.

The victim was at an ATM when a suspect holding a firearm approached and demanded money.

The victim said he did not have any money. The suspect hit the victim on the forehead with the handle of the firearm. The victim took money from the ATM and gave it to the suspect.

The suspect fled the scene.

Driving Under the Influence: Sunset Boulevard and Lawton Street, Nov. 20, 12:39 a.m.

Officers were on patrol when they observed a vehicle making sudden sharp turns, sudden stops and quick acceleration before slowing down again.

The officer, believing the driver might be driving under the influence, made a traffic stop.

After further investigation and testing, the driver was arrested.

Brandishing a Weapon: Quintara Street and 31st Avenue, Nov. 20, 4:08 p.m.

A Muni driver told the responding officer the suspect wanted to get off the bus, but the bus did not stop fast enough. The suspect brandished a knife at the driver.

Two additional incidents occurred when the suspect brandished a knife at other victims.

The suspect was later cited and taken to a hospital for a mental health evaluation.

Robbery With a Weapon: Ocean and 19th Avenues, Nov. 20, 6 a.m.

A victim with visible injuries to his face boarded a Muni light rail vehicle at 19th and Holloway avenues. A passenger assisted the victim and called 911.

The victim said he went out to dinner the night before and consumed a few alcoholic beverages and was attacked by two suspects. The victim was unable to provide further details regarding what happened.

The victim said he believed he lost consciousness from the attack. His house key and wallet were missing after he regained consciousness.

The victim was transported to the hospital for his injuries.

Burglary, Hot Prowl, Forcible Entry: 1100 Block of Kirkham Street, Nov. 22, 5:16 a.m.

A suspect forced entry into a building and stole a vehicle from the garage.

The victim tracked the vehicle and suspect to Sixth and Jessie streets.

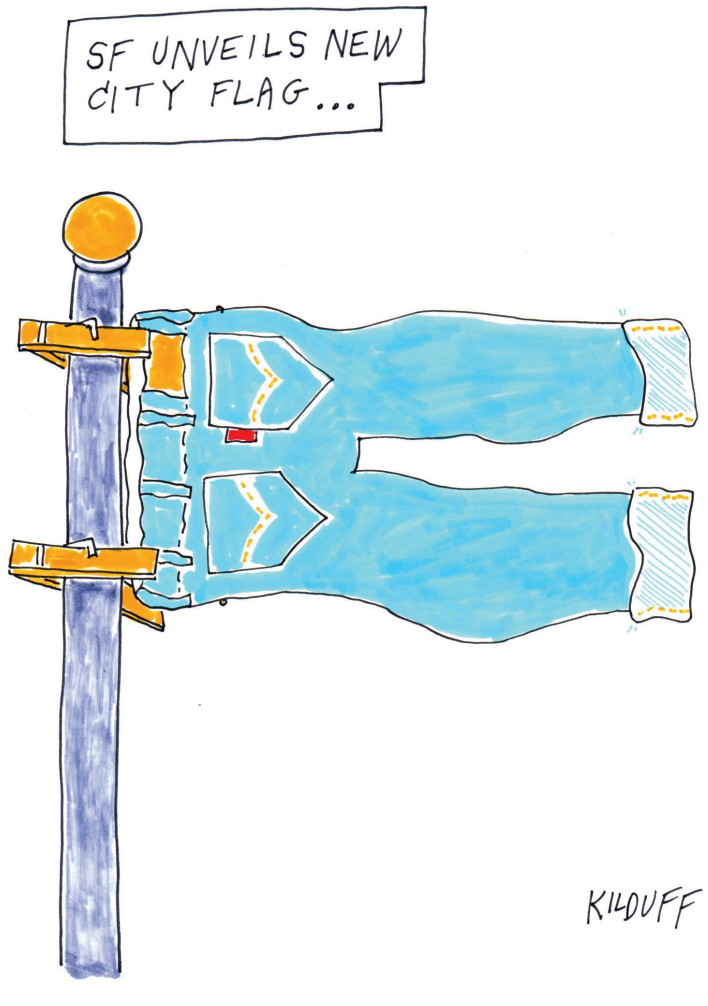
Officers located the suspect and placed him under arrest.

'PHOTOS OF THE MONTH' ONLINE GALLERY

Photographers are invited to submit three of their best photos for consideration to be published in the "Photos of the Month" gallery on RichmondSunsetNews.com. The website averages 20,000 views per month. Please submit photos as jpegs on or near the 15th of each month. Photos only – no captions. For more information, email Editor@RichmondSunsetNews.com or call 415-706-6428.

Photo by Travis Zeiler. @travis.zeiler.

Kilduff's Korner By Paul Kilduff



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City Hall

Supervisor Joel Engardio

More on Prop. K Fallout

I respect the views of Sunset voters who opposed Proposition K. Many have told me they didn't feel heard in their objection to it being on the ballot. I take this feedback to heart because it's important to me that everyone is heard.

As your supervisor, we won't agree 100% on every issue. But I always want to hear the concerns of my constituents and work to address them. I am committed to opening my door to you 100% of the time. That includes my phone and email in-box. I've already corresponded with and talked to hundreds of residents in the past month.

What I've been hearing loud and clear is a need to address neighborhood traffic and street safety concerns. My mission is to work with you. Together, we can improve our neighborhoods.

I understand many are worried that Prop. K will lead to increased traffic on side streets. Or that Sunset Boulevard and Lincoln Way won't be able to handle the traffic diverted from the Great Highway. Traffic engineers are working on improvements to ensure cars will get where they need to go. I will keep you informed throughout the park and traffic planning process and seek your input.

Next Steps with Rec. and Park

Rec. and Park has jurisdiction over the Upper Great Highway and is leading the implementation of Prop. K. Rec. and Park is seeking approvals from the Coastal Commission that will allow for better traffic circulation on the Great Highway at Lincoln Way and Sloat Boulevard. Rec. and Park says the closure could happen in the first quarter of 2025, after some key traffic issues are addressed – such as a new traffic signal coming online at Sloat Boulevard and Skyline Drive to replace a three-way stop sign. Construction upgrades and repaving on Sunset Boulevard will be completed soon, allowing for much better traffic flow.

I am working with city departments to better coordinate those traffic improvements. For example, SFMTA and the Department of Public Works are working on replacing a four-way stop sign at Lincoln and 41st Avenue with a traffic signal. I will keep you updated on our progress with that traffic light installation which will help keep traffic moving to Sunset Boulevard at a steady pace.

A recent news article created a stir with a headline about the removal of street parking along the San Francisco Zoo to create a protected bike lane. The new bike lane does not impact parking in the center of Sloat or on the residential side – and the article mentioned a new 100-space parking lot next to the Zoo. This bike lane project was not related to Prop. K. It was in the works long before and would have happened regardless of the outcome of Prop. K.

At the end of November, Rec. and Park announced it received a $1 million grant from the California State Coastal Conservancy Board. The grant will be used to help plan for dune restoration along the Great Highway, improved coastal access for everyone, better traffic management in nearby neighborhoods and community input on long-term park design.

I've requested Rec. and Park invite the community to a series of facilitated community discussions starting in the spring of 2025. The goal of those meetings is to gather neighborhood feedback on near-term park design and learn about any new traffic concerns that will require mitigation. These public meetings will include transportation professionals, park designers, neighborhood leaders and community members, as well as myself and my staff.

Recall

There have been news reports that a group of residents – including some who don't live in District 4 or even San Francisco – are seeking to recall me from office because of my support for Prop. K.

Voters have a right to recall their elected leaders. I respectfully ask voters to consider the entirety of my work representing them, and not just this one issue.

I was elected on a platform of making neighborhoods safer, supporting small businesses, standing up for better public education and making it easier to build the housing families need to stay in San Francisco. As supervisor, I've successfully championed more police protection in the Sunset, fought to bring algebra back to middle schools, reduced permitting red tape for our small businesses and passed housing legislation designed for middle-income families and seniors. I also secured funding for Sunset Boulevard greenway improvements, delivered relief funds to Taraval merchants impacted by street reconstruction and created night markets with community partners.

Prop. K was put on the ballot by five supervisors and supported by the mayor. We felt every voter should have a say about what to do with a coast that belongs to everyone. There is precedent. The fate of the central freeway and the future of JFK Drive was decided by voters citywide. Even the people opposed to Prop. K put their own measure on the ballot in 2022. They asked voters everywhere to kill the weekend compromise and reopen the Upper Great Highway to cars 24/7.

My recall is being sought because I supported putting Prop. K to a democratic vote of the people. It's important to note that a recall will not change the outcome or implementation of Prop. K.

I supported Prop. K because I believe it solves unavoidable concerns about the environment and what to do with a precious coast that belongs to all. I felt the people of San Francisco should be able to directly determine the future of their coastline. A majority of Sunset voters did not agree, and I invite every Sunset resident to work with me to address their concerns. I've also reached out to recall leaders to work together to solve common concerns about traffic flow and street safety.

While residents may disagree with me on this one issue, my door is always open to you on any topic. I've been a responsive supervisor on a myriad of issues that District 4 residents care about.

In full transparency, I supported past recalls of the school board and district attorney in 2022 because I felt they were failing to do the job they were elected to do. Parents felt the school board was more focused on renaming schools than getting kids back to school during the pandemic. Residents and crime victims felt the district attorney was not keeping them safe. These failures were fundamental to the job description. When Gov. Gavin Newsom was challenged with a recall in 2021, I opposed that effort. Although not every voter agreed with his policies or actions, he was doing the job voters elected him to do.

Moving Forward

I understand many Sunset residents rely on their cars to get around and there is a sense that City Hall is making it more difficult to be a car owner. My husband and I both drive every day, so we experience the same roads and pain points you do. If there are intersections or streets you are concerned about, please let me know and I will work to address those concerns. The same goes for where you think we need more stop signs or other traffic calming measures for pedestrian safety.

I'm committed to working with city agencies, our new mayor, and all Sunset residents to make Sunset streets safe and efficient.

Before Prop. K, it was known the Great Highway was losing its greatest utility as a direct connection to Daly City. With the southern section already set to close by the state Coastal Commission and legislated unanimously by the Board of Supervisors, all traffic will have to turn inland soon. Prop. K makes it possible to create a park by directing traffic to turn left at Lincoln instead of Sloat. Prop. K only applies to the stretch of road between Lincoln and Sloat that bypasses the Sunset without any on/off ramps for cars.

It's important to note that Sunset residents, many living near the Great Highway, are leading the effort to create an oceanside park. They formed a group called Friends of Great Highway Park nearly four years ago. They came up with the idea and advocated for it. I agreed with this vision because I believe a park will be good for the environment, provide a boost to local businesses and bring joy to generations of people.

We can all agree on the need for safer residential streets and better traffic flow across the west side. I look forward to working with you to mitigate traffic concerns and address pedestrian safety.

Joel Engardio is the District 4 representative on the San Francisco Board of Supervisors. He can be reached at engardio.com/contact.

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ANNOUNCEMENTS

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Sunset Community Band Formed to Create Catchy Tunes and Camaraderie

By Jaime Alfaro

Alex Strachan stands before an ensemble of 10 woodwind and brass musicians, his baton moving rhythmically through space as he conducts an outpour of musical notes. The various instruments are coming together to produce a bouncy melody, instantly identifiable as the Addams Family theme song.

The band is sight-reading the score for the first time, and they play the famous triplet of notes capped by a quarter note and, in unison, snap their fingers after the silent beat: dududuDAH *snap snap*!

The ensemble is a group of local, volunteer musicians who have come together at Alex and Nina Strachan's garage in the Outer Sunset to rehearse for its October gig on at the Sunset District's Fourth Annual Great Hauntway festival celebrating Halloween.

District 4 Supervisor Joel Engardio sent out a supervisor newsletter earlier this summer calling for the formation of a new marching band, for Sunset and San Francisco residents of all ages and experience levels, called the Sunset Community Band.

The Sunset Community Band performs at a Sunset Night Market event. *Photo by Pietro Fabiani.*

"It's amazing what happens when you put an idea into the universe," Engardio said. "I never expected our first-ever Sunset Night Market would bring 10,000 people to Irving Street. When that happened, I thought we also needed a Sunset Community Band to play at special events to celebrate everything that makes the Sunset so great."

The band's inaugural concert was in Oceanside's Fourth of July parade, and they are seeing significant growth.

"Celebrate every gig!" was a refrain expressed by Alex Strachan, the Sunset Community Band's conductor and volunteer leader/organizer along with co-leaders/founders Nina Strachan and arts school teacher Allyson Ward. The band gets together every Tuesday evening for practice. The band played at the Italian Heritage Festival on Oct. 13, where they represented the Sunset Community at Washington Square Park.

The couple, who have called San Francisco home for the past 10 years, spoke about the band's beginnings, and its future.

"We're able to get gigs easily," said Alex, an engineer and horn player and musician since the age of 4. He returned to community music since moving to the Bay Area a decade ago, and also serves as principal horn and assistant conductor for the Oakland Civic Orchestra. He attributes the band's booking power to the fact that it can function as a concert and marching ensemble.

"We're able to play outside," he says, whereas other bands require a lot of infrastructure and set-up to land and play gigs.

Nina, who has lived in the neighborhood for six years, has played in bands since childhood and college, and plays the flute and saxophone for the band. For Nina, the Sunset Community Band has offered a great way to get to know her community in more depth.

Nina and Alex are first-time parents to a gregarious 7-month-old, and they have met community members and other young parents through the band. Sourdough bread exchanges, helping with another community member's

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Ocean Beach Seawall Plan Approved

Continued from page 1

"We've been working for 15 years with the Army Corps of Engineers to get that sand placed and it was sort of a trial run. We continue to talk to the Army Corps of Engineers and are working with them on an agreement for the future."

The work began with the creation of the Ocean Beach Master Plan as a guiding document, which was published in 2012.

"A project of this size, that means many compromises," Roche said. "It takes multiple years with many people in the room discussing. You're not going to get it right for everybody, but it's a compromise. And that's what we've been working on."

She said this is the first large managed retreat project happening in the state of California.

"The design takes into account sea level rise through the end of the century. It is incorporated into our design. We take these things very seriously," Roche said.

While critics of the plan generally acknowledge the importance of saving the sewage plant and the Lake Merced Tunnel serving it, which sits under what's still left of the roadway, and also in dealing with climate change, some are not happy with this particular plan.

Nina Atkind, manager of the San Francisco chapter of the Surfrider Foundation and an Outer Sunset resident, urged the commission to demand a better plan from the SFPUC.

"While we recognize the challenge of protecting critically vulnerable infrastructure like the Lake Merced Tunnel, SFPUC's proposed solution – a 3,200-foot-long and 35-foot-tall sea wall – is neither forward thinking nor aligned with the Coastal Act's vision of sustainable shoreline management," Atkind said. "It is one of the largest armoring projects ever to come before you. Approving this as designed sets a dangerous precedent for excessive coastal armoring across California, undermining public access and natural shoreline preservation.

"The Ocean Beach Master Plan, developed through decades of community collaboration, prioritized managed retreat, partial highway relocation and temporary, low-profile armoring to protect infrastructure while planning for relocation inland. Instead of honoring this vision, SFPUC proposes a permanent wall that undermines years of planning and community input.

"The Commission must require a plan that aligns with the Ocean Beach Master Plan by incorporating true nature-based solutions and a binding timeline for managed retreat," she said.

A consultant involved in the creation of the OBMP, however, disagrees.

"An approach that's entirely nature-based has never been considered feasible, nor has the wholesale relocation of billions of dollars in critical public infrastructure," Benjamin Grant, a consultant who did extensive work on the OBMP, told the commission. "Rather, from the beginning, the Ocean Beach Master Plan and subsequent studies have always included a combination of managed retreat, beach nourishment and structural protection, as does the project before you.

The Oceanside Water Pollution Control Plant sits just east of what remains of the Great Highway extension between Sloat and Skyline boulevards. The sewage-water treatment plant is threatened by coastal erosion caused by the effects of climate change. *Photo by Michael Durand.*

"Some critics say that this project does not reflect the Ocean Beach Master Plan. I disagree," he said.

"The (OBMP) vision document is full of ideas (from) over a decade ago," Grant said. "Some of those ideas have moved forward and some have not. That is to be expected, as the nature of visions and of course the project has evolved in a variety of ways. It is explicitly acknowledged that this project is not an end-stage in either intention or regulatory approval, only the next phase in the long-term management of this coastline."

Moving the plant further inland has also been proposed but Dan Sider of the San Francisco Planning Department estimated the cost of doing that to be in the billions of dollars.

"There's the Westside Pump Station; there's the wastewater treatment plant itself, there's the ocean outfall that stands offshore and that's where the price tag in the billions of dollars comes from," Sider told the Commission. "It's all of those things together, including the Lake Merced Tunnel."

He also said the City's assessment is that there is not enough available land nearby to move the plant.

"The San Francisco Zoo is there. There's a patchwork of City-owned land there, but it doesn't appear that there's the amount of land that would be necessary to re-engineer, reconstruct all these facilities and make it work, from our perspective."

The CCC voted unanimously to approve the City's plan.

Pet Pix

Send up to three photos of your pet to Editor@RichmondSunsetNews.com by the 15th of the month for consideration for "Pet Pix." Please include your pet's name.

Creative Local Artists Featured at 'tiny/HUGE' Art Gallery Presentations

By Noma Faingold

Ceramicist Terrie Raphael, 77, who lives in the Outer Richmond District, does not like marketing herself.

She has a website called The Curious Potter, but she does not sell her inspired and tasteful mugs, plates and vases on it. In fact, she admits she rarely updates it. She also has an Instagram account. Her last post was in May.

"Social media creates its own energy, as long as you feed it," she said.

A couple of local shops and galleries carry Raphael's pieces year-round and she welcomes customers into her studio, located at Ruby's Clay Studio and Gallery in the Castro.

"I try to find non-tech ways of getting my work out to people," Raphael said. "I'd rather spend my time creating than on social media. If I could, I would be in my studio eight days a week."

Raphael is grateful that Studio Gallery, which exclusively showcases Bay Area artists, has again included her in the annual, well-promoted "tiny" show, now in its 20th year. It opened on Nov. 8 and runs through Dec. 23.

The "tiny" show features more than 225 artists and more than 300 pieces. All works are required to be under seven-by-seven inches, a nod to San Francisco's 49 square miles. The show is accessible to the public because all of the art, whether paintings, mixed media, ceramics, sculpture, photos or prints, is priced under $500. Many pieces are in the $200-$300 range and several are under $100.

"It's great for people who have never bought original art before," co-owner Jennifer Farris said. "Almost anyone can squeeze a five-by-seven painting in their home. For new buyers, it's like getting your first dress, which would not be a wedding dress."

Unlike most gallery shows, customers who make purchases can leave with the art. Farris and her husband, co-owner and painter Rab Terry quickly replace the sold art in the gallery with pieces they have in reserve. They also sell the "tiny" art online. According to Farris, the gallery sells hundreds of works during the event. Simultaneously, on display through Dec. 23, is the studio's "HUGE" show, consisting of several large-scale works, providing a visual contrast in the Polk Gulch space.

"The show evolves over its duration and is different every day," Farris said.

The "tiny/HUGE" presentation typifies Farris's and Terry's commitment to Bay Area artists, which has been their mission since they opened Studio Gallery in 2003. Many of the artists chosen are well established, while this year, 39 artists are making their debut in the space.

"This event is a good way to keep in touch with artists and discover Bay Area talent," Farris said. "It really anchors us in the community."

Raphael submitted mostly functional objects to the "tiny" show in the last few years. This year, she selected wall collages, such as one with purple ceramic disks attached to a square black wood panel.

At non-profit Ruby's – Raphael's home away from home – she has her own studio space, which she finally earned through seniority and nearly two decades of being on the board and volunteering. She is surrounded by shelves of vases, mugs, planters, bowls and platters with a variety of glaze color treatments and an assortment of forms. Most are successfully completed creations. But there are also a few experiments that did not quite work out.

The retired cultural anthropologist, who spent much of her career in health care planning for older adults, likes to use the potter's wheel, as well as make items by hand.

"It's very satisfying to work at the wheel. Once it goes around, the world kind of narrows to what's going on right in front of me," Raphael said. "My hands are working in total coordination."

Heather Robinson, 50, who lives in the Outer Sunset with husband Jaye, brings seven vibrant abstract paintings to the "tiny." Her signature style is colorful, layered work, influenced by textile design and architecture. However, what locals have responded to in past "tiny" shows is her quirky series called "Sutro in Fog," with the focal point being Sutro Tower.

"She takes a theme and explores it," Farris said. "She elevates the city scene with imaginative elements and great colors."

Web designer Robinson, who goes to Arc Studios and Gallery in SOMA five days a week, describes her larger scale paintings as "optimistic." Geometric patterns share the canvas with unpredictable shapes and free-form brushwork. She uses stencils as a foundation for most paintings.

"But a lot of the other layers are unplanned and imperfect," Robinson said. "I don't know how they are going to turn out. Each painting is a little snapshot of my mental state at the time."

Above: Ceramicist Terrie Raphael of the Richmond District is working on a piece at Ruby's Clay Studio and Gallery, her home away from home. *Photo by Noma Faingold.* Below: Outer Sunset artist Heather Robinson puts the finishing touches on one of her paintings. *Photo by Bob Hsiang.*

Using bold colors does not just draw art lovers to her paintings, they often uplift Robinson's mood.

"My work helps me feel that I have a place in the world," she said. "It's partly why I paint with cheerful colors."

The "tiny/HUGE" show runs through Dec. 23 at Studio Gallery, 1641 Pacific Ave., Thursday through Monday, noon-6 p.m. Learn more at STUDIOGallerySF.com. Facebook: studiogallerysf.Instagram: @studiogallerysf.

Links to explore more work of the profiled artists:

Heather Robinson: heatherrobinson.com, Instagram: @hnrfineart, Facebook: heatherrobinsonfineart.

Terrie Raphael: thecuriouspotter.com, Instagram: @thecuriouspotter.

Sunset Community Band

Continued from page 11

baby and creating inside jokes with folks she's met through the band, Nina said, are examples of how the Sunset Community Band has added a much more substantial layer of connection between her and her community, beyond a superficial hello.

There is also no language barrier, because the gatherings are held together by the language of music, Nina said. Refreshments and snacks are available at rehearsals.

In the garage, some of the band members chatted about movies, others talking shop on the nuts and bolts of tempo, and about witches so scary they can make a person lose his or her lunch. Other members remained more to themselves, choosing to express themselves primarily through their instruments.

Nina acknowledges there is a lot of work that goes into administering a band. On the back end, it can be hard booking rehearsal spaces, Nina explained. That is a major barrier for a lot of people who might otherwise want to pick up an instrument they used to play in school.

Many adults have lost the spaces they used to go to where they could nourish their talents, connect with others, and serve their community. Creating that space for rehearsals is key in getting the neighborhood to come together, break bread, and bring joy to their community, Nina said.

The new band was envisioned by Engardio as a way to stimulate a sense of neighborhood pride and joy in the Sunset District. Allyson Ward, who coaches horn at Ruth Asawa School of the Arts, and who, like many members of the band, has wanted to keep organized music as part of her adult life, says that although she comes from a more formal orchestra background, she wants people to know that the band is open to all.

"It's OK to have hobbies," said Ward, who plays horn for the Sunset Community Band. She said of the band, they are "grown adults with different pathways in their lives. You don't have to be the best."

"The goal is to make this an all-ages band where Sunset students who play in their school bands can join and get mentorship from experienced musicians," Engardio said. "Currently, the members range in age from 30s to 70s. The older folks can find purpose in being part of something popular while passing along advice to the younger generation."

The band is currently comprised of 13-14 regular members, with a total of about 16.

For Cambria Gersten, a P.E. teacher at Lowell High School, bringing out her bass clarinet after 22 years offered a way to rekindle a love affair with music.

"Playing with others is really wholesome and fun," she said. "I realized I missed that."

Gersten mentioned that she has been spotted by some of her students carrying her clarinet case, and that some of them were surprised by seeing another side of her beyond athletics.

"It's kind of fun," she said. "The multi-layers of human beings."

Brian Hueng, who played tuba for the Cal marching band, has found an alumni ensemble in the East Bay, but is happy to get to know other musicians in his neighborhood in the Sunset.

"It's nice to play where my family, my kids, can see," Hueng said.

Others are looking for a way to recharge. Telly Cheung – a flutist for the band who played the instrument in high school and who currently works as a pediatrician – says the band gives him some breathing room "away from work, where I don't have to think too much and just play with others."

The band is currently recruiting for more band members, musicians of all ages who play woodwinds, percussion and strings. The band is both a seated band (wind band or orchestra), and a marching band that can play concerts at special parade events.

The Sunset Community Band is also seeking non-playing volunteers to help out with marketing, fundraising and

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'Then and Now': Frederick Street at Arguello Boulevard

Left: This photo shows Frederick Street, looking west to Arguello Boulevard, on June 2, 1908. Tracks are for the Market Street Railway #7 streetcar. Polytechnical High School to the left. *Photo courtesy of a private collector/Western Neighborhoods Project/OpenSFHistory.* Right: As with most "now" photos in this feature, streetcar tracks are gone and plenty of trees fill the scene. Also gone (or paved over) are the cobblestones. A sign of modern times is the presence of speed humps. *Photo by Michael Durand.*

UGH Post Prop. K

Continued from page 1

until the City obtains this permit, or until the already scheduled end of the program on Dec. 31, 2025, whichever comes first.

"We're really excited that the San Franciscans see and share the vision that we've had for years. We're excited to get to work to make that vision come to fruition," said Lucas Lux, board president of Friends of the Great Highway Park.

For the past four years, the UGH has gone through different iterations of public access. It was first shut-down to traffic – with the exception of Muni and emergency vehicles – in 2020 due to COVID-19. After a prolonged period of closure, community groups, like Open the Great Highway and Friends of the Great Highway, formed in response to residents' concerns.

In 2022 the current agreement was put in place, which only shut the road on weekends and holidays. Vin Budhai, founder of the Open the Great Highway/"No on K" campaign, said this agreement worked for both recreational park-goers and weekly commuters.

"(Our) campaign was just all about leaving the compromise in place," Budhai said. "The commuters get what they want. And the folks who want the park, they get what they want."

This summer, when District 4 Supervisor Joel Engardio introduced Proposition K to the ballot, it became "an all or nothing game," Budhai said. "That's why I came back into the picture to fight it."

The latest data available show more than 14,000 vehicles utilize the Great Highway each weekday, according to the San Francisco Municipal Transportation Agency (SFMTA) and the San Francisco Recreation and Park Department. Budhai is one of many Sunset residents who worry about where that traffic will go.

"All those cars are now going to flood through our neighborhood streets, which they're not designed for. And 19th Avenue and Sunset Boulevard are not capable of handling that traffic," Budhai said.

To mitigate this concern, the City announced in a Nov. 21 press release they will be making the following modifications/improvements to prepare for rerouted traffic in the Sunset District:

- Repaving Sunset Boulevard.
- Activating a new signal at Sloat Boulevard and Skyline Boulevard.
- Activating a new signal at Skyline Boulevard and the Upper Great Highway.
- Traffic changes to the promenade intersections of the Great Highway at Lincoln Way and Sloat Boulevard.

Additionally, the City stated they have "installed 25 speed humps and 12 stop signs on directly adjacent streets to Great Highway." They plan to install traffic signals "along the Lincoln Way corridor at La Playa Street, 41st Avenue and 45th Avenue."

"Regardless of how you voted on Prop. K, we all share the same passion for making our neighborhood a better place," Lux said. "We are excited and look forward to working with all of our neighbors on making the park the best it can be and addressing any concerns that folks have on the traffic impact on the streets that we live on."

Although Budhai said his Open the Great Highway/"No on K" campaign is in discussion with "Yes on K" members, their fight is not yet over.

"I am keeping my options open to try to figure out ways to get the highway reopened," Budhai said. "Even though we lost on Proposition K, we're still going to keep advocating for our neighborhood, for the Sunset and for the Great Highway. We're not giving up the fight."

Sunset Band

Continued from page 12

administration, design and choreography.

Engardio believes there is a kind of renaissance in store for the Sunset District, where he says there's a unique energy:

"The return of the L streetcar, the number of innovative small businesses choosing to open up in the Sunset, the energy of our Sunset Chinese Cultural District, our night markets and Sunday farmer's market and the destination restaurants with lines out the door are all examples of potential being unleashed in the Sunset post-pandemic, even when areas like downtown continue to struggle," Engardio said.

"The Sunset Community band will be there to celebrate the joy that exists in the Sunset as we work to create more of it," he added.

To learn more, go to sunsetcommunityband.com.

The closed-to-traffic Upper Great Highway on Sunday, Dec. 1, 2024, is filled with pedestrians and bicyclists, part of what Prop. K proponents envision full time in the future. The working plan is to turn the area into a park. *Photo by Michael Durand.*

Happy Holidays!

Artship at Outer Sunset Farmers Market a Holdover From Playland on 43rd Avenue

By Vanessa VerLee

Since 2020, a quiet stretch of 37th Avenue in the Sunset District has been a hub of connection and creativity. Nestled between A.P. Giannini Middle School and Sunset Boulevard, and free from residential homes or driveways, this street has transformed into a vibrant space for markets, cultural events and community collaborations.

At the heart of these activities sits "The Artship," a vividly painted shipping container serving as a creative hub during events. It offers art supplies, themed workshops and cultural programming that blends education, community building and play.

Angie Petitt, a Sunset District resident since the early 1990s, founded Sunset Mercantile in 2014, a mission-driven business that fosters community through markets and events. With locations across the neighborhood, the organization plays a central role in activating 37th Avenue and beyond.

The concept of The Artship emerged from "Playland on 43rd Avenue," a project where Petitt and collaborators transformed a neglected parking lot into a thriving community space with a skate park, garden, playground and The Artship, a shipping container that the Friends of Playland transformed into an artist in residence space.

Although Playland has since been replaced by the Shirley Chisholm Village housing development, supporting local educators and their families, the spirit of Playland on 43rd Avenue lives on in The Artship, now located on 37th Avenue near Ortega Street.

Helping to maintain that spirit, former Playland on 43rd Avenue Steward, Karen Hendrickson, joined the Sunset Mercantile team in 2022, bringing her passion for art and literacy to helping to coordinate art activities, cultural programming and literacy programs, including a free library to the community through The Artship.

The colorful shipping container at the Outer Sunset Farmers Market is home to The Artship, a resource dedicated to creativity, learning and community. *Courtesy photo.*

"Every time we host an event, The Artship is part of it," Petitt said. From tie-dye workshops to crafts inspired by current events to cultural events like their recent Diwali celebration, The Artship engages participants of all ages. "We're trying more and more to bring adults into it, to tap into their creative side and inner play."

During the pandemic, 37th Avenue was temporarily closed, offering a safe outdoor space for activities like dance classes and school graduations. This inspired Petitt's vision for a permanent community hub.

"If the street were permanently closed, the possibilities are endless," she said. "We could work with schools, host interactive exhibits and create spaces for seniors and teens – a place for community connection and well-being."

However, significant hurdles remain. The street is currently used by school buses, and approvals from both the City and the school district are required. Funding is another challenge.

While grants from organizations like New Deal have supported The Artship's programming, much of the work relies on Petitt's staff and limited resources.

"I'm passionate about it, so we (the staff of Sunset Mercantile) just kind of keep it going," Petitt admitted.

To address these constraints, Petitt is considering a nonprofit arm for Sunset Mercantile.

"A lot of people have suggested going nonprofit," she said. "There's so much we do that could fit under that structure, making it easier to fundraise for projects such as The Artship."

Despite these challenges, 37th Avenue's events are thriving. The farmers markets and Secondhand Saturdays draw lively crowds, while cultural celebrations, like Día de los Muertos, offer rich programming for families. There is also an outdoor play and seating area built by the local non-profit Climate Action Now and a community garden. The Artship's presence extends to nearby events outside of 37th Avenue, such as the Movies in McCoppin series, where The Artship staff member Nova Taylor went mobile offering craft-themed projects for the films shown.

Looking ahead, Petitt dreams of expanding offerings to include evening events like night markets and illuminated exhibits.

"I see this as a great opportunity, especially for teens," she said. "There's not a lot for young people to do in the Sunset, and it would be wonderful to give them a safe, fun place to gather."

Whether it is through solar panels for The Artship, expanded programming including wellness classes or permanent street closures, Petitt's vision is bold and inclusive. With the dedication of her team at Sunset Mercantile and the support of the community, this unassuming stretch of 37th Avenue is poised to become a cornerstone of Outer Sunset life.

"We've already seen how much good can come from creating these community spaces," she said. "The possibilities really are endless."

Internet Archive

Continued from page 7

perience in copyright law led her to organize Public Domain Day at the archive, an event that celebrates new additions to the public domain after their copyrights expire.

"This is the community that is here to shepherd this shared cultural heritage into the modern era," she said.

For Bailey, the Archive's physical building plays a significant role in the effort of community building.

"It's not downtown, it's not a Silicon Valley-style open work plan, it's a church," she said. "It's this space that gets to be both hyper-local and global at the same time."

The Archive also works closely with local artists, most recently hosting Oakland-based fiber installation artist Swilk for a six-month residency program. Swilk's work culminated in November with a piece entitled "When you're looking for something, it's important to know who was in love." The woven installation incorporated the Internet Archive's records in real time with "motors that were designed to respond as people access historic HIV documents that were compiled for the project" from the Internet Archive, according to the artist.

In part, the work calls attention to who uses the Archive and why.

"There were a lot of people who were obviously just nostalgic for these resources and revisiting them, who lived through this time and were going back," Swilk said. "But also, there were a lot of digital archivists and people who were doing specific research in this field. I found a lot of academics were also still accessing this information because people are having to retrace steps to document this history."

The work weaves connections between the histories of HIV, the internet, and San Francisco, and its opening reception last month brought people with connections to that history together.

"I spoke with so, so many people about the ways that their own lives have intersected with the subject matter," Swilk said.

For Swilk, documents on the Internet Archive also represent a chance to uncover secret histories.

"When people died, it was often their secret lovers who kept their stuff," Swilk said. "And many of these documents and artifacts at this time are still just in people's garages and attics and storage rooms. And just this idea that people were actively mapping the world and landscaping the world with these relationships that otherwise were kept secret at that time in order to validate and document this history that was so, so, so crucial and saved so many lives."

For art projects director Amir Esfahani, who works with several artists every year through the Internet Archive, Swilk's work represents the potential of the Archive in artists' hands.

"So much of this early HIV data and human experience on the web would have been lost if the Internet Archive did not have it," he said. "I think it is impossible to think about art these days without technology, unless you are just working very technically on something like en plein air landscape painting or something like that. You can't be connected to the world without being online, and archive.org, especially the Wayback Machine, is the holder of so much modern data that is on the verge of either being lost or being manipulated."

"I felt a deeply human connection to the ways that we think about data," Swilk said. "So much of the data that is digital often culturally gets couched as cold and removed from other people, but all of the things that were being looped into this project were very much a product of a very strong sense of humanity that people had amongst one another and were representative of the love that people shared for each other as well."

Other events at the Archive include film screenings, panel discussions and presentations, as well as programming by other organizations, such as The Intersection of Art and Technology (TIAT), which gave 10 artists a platform to present their digital (non-commercial) creations in the Archive's auditorium.

"It is vital for folks to have a place to meet physically and re-calibrate to their fellow humans," said Evan Sirchuk, the Archive's community and events coordinator. "I want to host events that draw folks into opportunities to meet people outside of our own narrow social niches. Hopefully they will recall those positive real-life interactions when they are exposed to negative finger-pointing narratives online," he said.

"Recently we have found ourselves hosting a number of political forums, debates, and community meetings," said facilities manager Kevin O'Heir. "It seems increasingly rare to find these places where people can interact and learn about their communities, so we're happy to help fill that void."

O'Heir also manages a weekly co-working meeting for members of DWeb (short for Decentralized Web), a coalition of technologists and thinkers who work closely with the Internet Archive to plan events and to collaborate toward alternative visions for the future of the web. DWebbers generally see a few crucial mistakes in the history of the development of the commercial internet.

"We're basically trying to move back in the opposite direction, where we get more power to the users, everything's less centralized," said "DWebber" and philosopher Rex Riepe.

For Day Waterbury, DWeb is fundamentally about community. "Working tech is being built," Waterbury said. "But more than that, webs of trust are being built."

It is easy to feel today that there are two versions of everything – one real and one virtual. The Internet Archive on Funston Avenue helps to connect us to the Internet Archive by opening its doors to the public, reconnecting us to the humanity latent in our own technology and offering a vision of the internet that could be.

In addition to its various programmed events, the Archive opens its doors to the public for free tours every Friday at 1 p.m. Tours are "typically led by their founder Brewster Kahle or a senior director. These are open to the public, no need to register, and a great way to learn about a wonderful institution that exists in our neighborhood," according to O'Heir.

The Internet Archive is located at 300 Funston Ave. Learn more at Archive.org.

Merchant News

DeeDee Hunt

Annual Holiday Lights Stroll Dec. 7

The Inner Sunset Merchants Association, in partnership with the Inner Sunset Park Neighbors and Sunset Mercantile, invites everyone to experience the magic of the holidays at the fourth annual Inner Sunset Holiday Lights Stroll on Dec. 7, 5-8 p.m.

The neighborhood will come alive as a dazzling winter wonderland. The evening begins with a special opening ceremony at Eighth Avenue and Irving Street, setting the stage for a festive celebration that unites local businesses and the community in a shared spirit of joy, holiday lights and cheer.

Join us for a night featuring trolley rides through illuminated streets, living window displays with actors bringing holiday scenes to life, live music by talented local artists and photo opportunities galore for capturing memories with friends and family. Take a magical stroll along the entire festive route, stretching from Fifth Avenue to 18th Avenue, where beautifully lit and decorated storefronts set the scene for discovering unique local businesses offering one-of-a-kind holiday finds, delicious food and drink, fun activities and more.

For those who love a bit of adventure, a thrilling neighborhood-wide scavenger hunt will have participants using clues to earn raffle tickets throughout the evening, with prizes, including candy, gift cards and a grand prize – a "Taste of Inner Sunset" basket filled with goodies from local businesses and tickets to popular attractions.

Local merchants are pulling out all the stops this year with awe-inspiring decorations, mouthwatering food and drink offerings, special holiday promotions and extended hours to offer a unique holiday shopping experience. The Holiday Lights Stroll is the perfect opportunity to support small businesses and discover all the unique gifts and services the neighborhood has to offer.

Event highlights include:

• Trolley rides: Enjoy a ride through the beautifully decorated streets of the Inner Sunset.

• Living window displays: Watch as actors bring festive scenes to life in shop windows.

• Live music and entertainment: Enjoy performances from local musicians and entertainers all along the holiday lights stroll route.

• Neighborhood Scavenger Hunt: Win prizes as you explore the neighborhood and complete scavenger hunt challenges.

• Photo opportunities: Snap a picture with friends, family or a festive scene along the stroll.

Bring your family and friends, stroll the neighborhood, and help spread holiday cheer in the Inner Sunset! Learn more at innersunsetmerchants.org/events.

DeeDee Hunt is the owner of Hunt and Gather Gallery at 1108 Irving St. She is a member of the Inner Sunset Merchants Association.

Open Mic Night at the Riptide Offers Entertainment Along With Encouragement

By Sydney Williams

The creaky door to the Riptide bar, on Taraval Street between 46th and 47th avenues, swings open revealing the hum of light conversations, clinking glasses and the occasional burst of laughter. Stained-glass lamps hang above tables and red LED lights under the double-sided bar create a dim ethereal ambiance.

New faces introduce themselves to their neighbors and build new connections that feel as though they have known each other for years.

Sand dollars found down the block on Ocean Beach are displayed over a brick fireplace. A carpet creates a makeshift stage where the Riptide hosts its Monday open mic nights and live weekly music events.

As the clock hits 7 p.m., musicians with various instruments line up to secure a spot in this week's open mic, hoping to showcase their talent to the Sunset neighborhood.

In the aftermath of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Riptide, has reemerged as a vital hub of community and camaraderie. After many months of canceled events, the treasured dive bar's doors have re-opened, and the neighborhood's well-loved honky-tonk bar's live events are back in full swing. The bustling atmosphere remains the same and once again provides the Sunset with live music and an inviting space for people to enjoy a drink or two with neighbors.

"One of my favorite things about this bar that makes me laugh a lot is people will walk in because we're two blocks from the beach and ask, 'Is it okay if I have my dog in here?' I tell them, yeah, there's a water bowl right by the front door," said Danny Sando, who has worked at the Riptide for 12 years. "We've literally had dog birthday parties here. It's very, very neighborhood here. It's like a living room."

At the peak of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Riptide had to adapt to the new bar regulations enforced by the City of San Francisco. In order to abide by the new rules, the Riptide had to make the hard decision to stop all indoor services, including its live events.

After being closed for a month or two, the Riptide staff decided to operate the bar as a drive-through – one order window and one pick-up window – and host its live music events outside on its patio.

"Our street was under construction at the time," said Jean Hamilton, the Riptide's bar manager. "So, people had space to spread out and hang out and take to-go drinks. And then, when we finally were allowed to make a parklet, we did music outside. It made a really cool sense of community."

Daniel Agnello, originally from New Jersey, just moved to San Francisco and heard about the Riptide open mic night and decided to participate. The showcase for local talent started more than 20 years ago. It is back in full force after the COVID-19 pandemic drove the collaboration onto Zoom. *Photo by Sydney Williams.*

Now, the Riptide is able to operate without enforced restrictions and can continue to host indoor open mics and live music events.

Open Mic Mondays was the original event hosted at the Riptide by the two owners more than 20 years ago, reflecting their love of live music. Their goal was to bring music to the community and give musicians a safe place to perform and experiment.

With the original owners' mission still in mind, Charlie Kaupp has since taken over hosting open mic nights for the last six years.

"We've created a community here that doesn't exist really anywhere else," Kaupp said. "This particular community has spawned a lot of other bands. People have formed friendships. People have gotten married who met here at the open mic. And I think it's a really special place and a special event. I truly do it because I love it."

After the six weeks of online Zoom open mics during the peak of the COVID-19 pandemic, Kaupp is thrilled that he can now host his open mic events in person. He is also glad that not much has changed since moving the event back to in-person.

"I've noticed in the songwriting that the original artists do, a lot of great writing took place during COVID because we all kind of grieved together. It was a shared experience," Kaupp said. "Open mic with the community becomes a place to showcase that shared experience."

Open mics allow musicians to gain exposure, grow creatively and practice performing in front of a live audience. The Riptide welcomes any musician at any experience level to use their stage and share their music with a supportive audience. All they have to do is show up and sign up.

"Everybody here is super encouraging," Sando said. "And in just over a month or two, seeing the progress that that one person makes, they get more confident playing in front of people. They get more comfortable. They get better at their instrument."

From folk rock to Reggae and Rap, the Riptide's open mic showcases a variety of musical genres and talent.

Holly Cunard, a self-taught musician living in the Richmond District, was encouraged by her sister to participate in open mic nights after adding pick-ups to her acoustic guitar to amplify the sound. When her sister found out about Monday's open mic showcases at the Riptide, Canard built up the courage and decided to take to the stage for the first time.

"Of course, I'm nervous," Cunard said. "I love playing in front of people, but I also don't love exposing myself in that way. But the people here made me feel so comfortable, just hyping everyone up."

Nick Maitoza has been performing at open mic events since May 2023 and has secured a permanent performance slot every first Thursday of the month. Maitoza's '90s and early 2000s cover band brings a new vocalist to each of its shows and allows other independent artists to explore the stage while also gaining performance experience for himself.

"You feel like a real professional when you get a recurring monthly gig. It's just fun," Maitoza said.

The Riptide, located at 3639 Taraval St., is open daily from 3 p.m. to 2 a.m. Learn more at RiptideSF.com.

For advertising rates
call (415) 706-6428
or email Editor@
RichmondSunsetNews.com

From the Editor

Continued from page 4

gentleman. So many superlatives used to describe outstanding individuals can apply to Doug. He was kind, compassionate, smart and extraordinarily talented.

We published a story about Doug as an artist (find it on our website by searching for "Doug Gorney" at RichmondSunsetNews.com).

I was almost Doug's roommate. When I was looking for a new place to live a few years ago, I checked out the extra room in Doug's flat near Irving in the Outer Sunset. If I hadn't found the quiet apartment where I now live alone, I would have jumped at the chance to share a living space with him.

A true sign of a person with a kind soul, he was very happy when he saw you. He loved people.

At his memorial service, his family and friends experessed what I witnessed – Doug was a remarkable human being. I was tempted to get up and speak kindly about him, too. I even wanted to share my experience last year when I suffered a massive heart attack – that is what took Doug away from this world. I'm hoping his experience was similar to mine. When I knew I was suffering a life-threatening event, there was a calmness and peace that I felt. I had no sense of panic or dread. I truly hope that serenity and peace were Doug's final feelings.

I will miss Doug's warmth and generosity of spirit. I am happy I knew him. My sincere condolences to his family and friends.

Gratitude

Since celebrating good fortune is the theme of this month's column, I want to express my appreciation for all of our terrific writers. Like painters, musicians, dancers and other artists, writers have a calling to put words together. Reading stories about our neighbors is why we exist as a newspaper and I am sincerely thankful to know so many great writers who take the time to explain what's happening in our community. Most writers take their own photos for their stories, too.

I appreciate our columnists as well. Writing a column each month is not an easy task, and I have great admiration for our contributors – especially longtime colleagues Quentin Kopp and John Lee who have been with us from before I took over the papers.

I am also grateful to our delivery team. We don't have enough papers to be delivered to every home each month, so the team switches from one half of the neighborhood one month to the other half the next. They drop off bundles of papers to the local libraries, coffee shops, bookstores and other locations. Thank you to the dedicated team for helping us share the stories.

Meet the Editor

I am hoping to bring back the monthly meet the editor sessions in 2025. If you have a small business or organization that would be a good spot for a small meeting, I would love to offer the opportunity to hear from our readers and to share my perspective on this beautiful corner of one of the most beautiful cities in the world. My email is below, if you have any suggestions.

Happy holidays to all!

Michael Durand is the editor and publisher of the Richmond Review and Sunset Beacon newspapers and the RichmondSunsetNews.com website. He can be reached at Editor@RichmondSunsetNews.com.

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